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# **2013 Service Academy Gender Relations Focus Groups**

## **Overview Report**

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# **2013 SERVICE ACADEMY GENDER RELATIONS FOCUS GROUPS**

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DMDC's Survey Design, Analysis, & Operations Branch, under the guidance of Elizabeth P. Van Winkle, Deputy Branch Chief, is responsible for the development and oversight of questionnaires and focus groups in the survey program. The lead analysts on this assessment were Paul Cook, SRA International, Inc., and Lindsay Rock, DMDC. Written transcripts of each of the sessions were provided by Niziankiewicz & Miller Reporting Services, LLC; Corbin & Hook Reporting, Inc.; Gail Sherry Court Reporting Associates, Inc.; and Jennifer Windham Court Reporting, Inc. Policy officials contributing to the development of focus group content include: Sharon Cooper, Executive Director, Defense Human Resources Activity; Major General Gary Patton, Nate Galbreath, Darlene Sullivan, and Anita Boyd (Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office); Jimmy Love, (Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity); LTC Kay Emerson and MAJ Missy Rosol (U.S. Military Academy); CAPT Lynn Acheson and LCDR Franklin Lendor (U.S. Naval Academy); Amanda Lords (U.S. Air Force Academy); Mr. Antonio Farias and LT Nic Jarboe (U.S. Coast Guard Academy).

# **2013 SERVICE ACADEMY GENDER RELATIONS FOCUS GROUPS**

## **Executive Summary**

The *2013 Service Academy Gender Relations Focus Group (2013 SAGR)* study is a focus group assessment conducted per U.S. Code 10 as amended by Section 532 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 (10USC§4361). The *2013 SAGR* is part of an assessment cycle at the Military Service Academies (MSAs) starting in 2005 that consists of alternating surveys and focus groups. This focus group study assesses students' perception of issues related to sexual assault, sexual harassment, and other gender-related topics at the U.S. Military Academy (USMA), the U.S. Naval Academy (USNA), the U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA), and the U.S. Coast Guard Academy (USCGA).

Separate sessions were conducted for male and female students in the freshman and senior class years as well as separate sessions for men and women in sessions that combined sophomores and juniors. Academic faculty (civilian and military), coaches and activity leaders, and military cadre (company/squadron officers, training NCOs) exert considerable influence on students' beliefs and values; therefore focus groups of those Academy personnel were conducted as well.

Data from the focus groups were analyzed qualitatively to identify major themes and ideas conveyed across the sessions. For each theme, supporting comments from the focus group participants are included. Analysts used a combination of topical coding and repeated reviews to gather specific comments that supported the emerging themes. Where students and personnel differed in their opinions on a topic, both perspectives are presented in separate findings. Although focus group findings cannot be generalized to all students and personnel at each of the Academies, findings serve as illustrations of situations and themes for consideration by Academy officials as they review their programs.

Findings are presented in separate chapters for cadets/midshipmen and Academy personnel. Within chapters, the major themes are presented with specific findings and supporting comments. Each comment identifies the gender of the student and the category (Faculty, Military, Athletic) of the personnel. DMDC analysts also summarized potential opportunities for addressing issues raised by focus group participants. These opportunities are based on comments from the participants and the conclusions drawn from DMDC analysts. They are not directive or binding, but rather are offered to stimulate discussion and consideration by Academy leadership.



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# **2013 SERVICE ACADEMY GENDER RELATIONS FOCUS GROUPS**

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

The Service Academies strive to provide a safe educational and leadership development environment for their students. Working with their Service Headquarters and the Department of Defense (DoD) Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO), the Academies have implemented programs to reduce sexual harassment and unwanted sexual contact/sexual assault, and to provide reporting and victim care procedures. Recurring evaluation of these programs is helpful for developing process improvements aimed at reducing instances of sexual harassment and assault and enhancing victim care.

One source of information for evaluating these programs and for assessing the gender relations environment at the Academies involves quantifiable feedback from students through a representative survey. Another source of information involves qualitative feedback from students through focus groups with a moderator who is trained to facilitate discussion on these topics. This report presents findings from the recent *2013 Service Academy Gender Relations Focus Group (2013 SAGR)* study. This introductory chapter provides background on why this study was conducted, a description of the focus group methodology, analysis methods and limits, and a brief overview of subsequent chapters.

U.S. Code 10 as amended by Section 532 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 codified an assessment cycle at the Academies that consists of alternating surveys and focus groups. The first assessment in this series was conducted in 2004 by the DoD Inspector General (IG). Responsibility for subsequent assessments was transferred to the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) beginning in 2005. This requirement applies to the U.S. Military Academy (USMA), U.S. Naval Academy (USNA), and U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA). DMDC conducted surveys in 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010, and 2012 and focus groups in 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013. The U.S. Coast Guard Academy (USCGA), the only Federal Military Academy within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), is not required to participate in the assessments codified by U.S. Code 10. However, USCGA officials requested they be included, beginning in 2008, in order to evaluate and improve their programs addressing sexual harassment and assault.

### ***Data Collection Methodology***

The Human Resources Strategic Assessment Program (HRSAP) within DMDC follows standard, scientific methods that are widely used in the survey industry for data collections across a variety of domains. The program for assessments at the Military Service Academies (MSAs) is unique in that two different methodologies are used in a complimentary, alternating cycle of surveys and focus group assessments. Each type of assessment provides distinct insights into gender issues: the surveys provide valid statistical information about incidence rates and students' perception on a host of issues; the focus groups provide deeper insights into the dynamics behind the numbers. Together they help Academy leaders and Service policy makers assess the effectiveness of programs and identify areas for improvement. Additionally,

each type of assessment informs the other. For example, survey results are used to identify topics for deeper discussion during the focus groups and the focus group identify new questions to be asked on the surveys.

During the survey years, DMDC uses scientific, state of the art statistical techniques to draw conclusions from random, representative samples of the MSA student populations. A cornerstone of DMDC's methodology is the use of complex sampling and weighting procedures to ensure accuracy of estimations to the full student population at each MSA. The use of scientific sampling and weighting methods to construct population estimates are the same methods used by all federal statistical agencies (e.g., the Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics), private survey organizations (e.g., RAND, WESTAT, and RTI), and well-known polling organizations (e.g., Gallup, Pew, and Roper).

Another cornerstone of DMDC's survey methodology is the use of similar incidence rate measures in the MSA populations as DMDC surveys of active duty and Reserve components. Specifically, DMDC measures unwanted sexual contact, sexual harassment, components of sexual harassment, and sexist behavior using identical, behaviorally based questions on surveys of each of the different military populations. This allows for reliable comparisons of rates at the MSAs with the Services' active duty and Reserve component populations. The unwanted sexual contact measure (USC) is behaviorally-based and encompasses a range of behaviors consistent with those prohibited in the UCMJ. The items were developed through an iterative process that included consultation with DoD legal counsel, discussions with researchers at the University of Illinois, examination of sexual assault surveys used with civilian populations, and focus group research with Academy students. The sexual harassment measure (including component measures and sexist behavior) was derived from the Sexual Experiences Questionnaire (SEQ) by researchers at the University of Illinois and adapted for use in DoD populations. The DoD-SEQ consists of 12 behaviorally stated items measuring sexual harassment and four behaviorally stated items measuring sexist behavior. Using classical test theory, item response theory, and factor analysis, the measure has been found to provide reliable measurement of gender-related experiences.

### ***Focus Group Methodology***

Similar to DMDC's survey methodology that follows accepted industry practices, DMDC's focus group methodology employs a standard qualitative research approach to collect subjective details from participants on a limited number of topics. The methodology used in the 2013 focus group cycle follows the same principles used in the previous three focus group cycles. The methodology for the 2013 focus groups was replicated for each session at each Academy. Although the results cannot be generalized to the population of the Service Academies, they provide insights into issues and ideas for further consideration. Procedures for selecting participants, developing the questions, and analyzing the data are described below.

### ***Selection of Participants***

Participation in the 2013 focus groups was voluntary. Participants were selected at random at each Service Academy and offered the opportunity to participate. To select

participants, each Service Academy first supplied DMDC a roster of all cadets or midshipmen.<sup>1</sup> DMDC randomized the list of students within clusters defined by gender and class year. The rosters were then returned to each respective Academy and it was the responsibility of each Academy to use their randomized list to identify the first ten students who were available (e.g., did not have a class scheduled during the focus group) to attend the focus group appropriate for their gender and class year. Students were contacted by their Academy and asked if they would voluntarily participate in the focus group. Additional students were selected from the randomized lists as necessary to achieve eight to ten students committed to attending. In some cases, students who agreed to participate did not show up at the scheduled session. For that reason, session sizes varied. For mixed-gender focus groups, similar procedures were used, selecting an equal number of junior and senior men and women to achieve sessions of approximately 10 students.

For the sessions of faculty, coaches and activity leaders, and military cadre, academy officials advertised the sessions through the most appropriate forum and solicited volunteers until they received eight to ten participants committed to each session.

### ***Development of Questions***

To begin the collaborative effort of developing focus group questions, DMDC analysts drafted potential questions by reviewing comments and findings from the *2012 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey (2012 SAGR)*. Analysts looked for follow-up topics that might clarify or expand upon findings from the previous year's survey. A list of preliminary questions was generated and provided to the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO), as well as to the DoD Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity (ODMEO) and to each Service Academy. A revised set of questions incorporating comments from SAPRO, ODMEO, and the Academies was compiled and then returned to each for final revisions. Six question areas with detailed subquestions (probing questions) were presented to student focus group participants. The focus group protocols for students and the student handouts are included in the Appendices. The topics addressed were:

1. Sexual Assault—awareness of the behaviors that comprise unwanted sexual contact, discussion of the incidence rates for men and women from the *2012 SAGR* survey, knowledge of where incidents were most likely to occur, thoughts on victims experiencing multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact over time, role of “sexting” and pornography, and the role alcohol plays in unwanted sexual contact.
2. Sexual Harassment/Sexist Behavior—discussion of the sexual harassment and sexist behavior incidence rates from the *2012 SAGR* survey, the possible relationships among these unwanted gender-related behaviors, whether cultural factors (e.g., attitudes of disrespect toward women) contributed to unwanted sexual contact, and discussion of recommendations for decreasing sexual harassment and sexist behavior.

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<sup>1</sup> The roster excluded foreign national students, as well as exchange students.

3. Reporting—opinions of a number of potential reasons for not reporting, especially the perceived repercussions from reporting, and recommendations for removing barriers to reporting.
4. Perceptions of Leadership—opinions about the degree to which students interact with leadership on these issues, whether leaders react appropriately and lead by example, and what else leaders can do to help diminish unwanted sexual contact.
5. Training—discussion of training received, perception of their training in reducing unwanted sexual contact, examples of most effective training, and recommendations for improvement.
6. Additional Recommendations—how well prepared students felt for dealing with future gender-related issues once they have subordinates, opinions on counseling for cadets and midshipmen who experienced USC prior to coming to the Academy, helpfulness of a Dignity and Respect Code, and final thoughts. The questions ended with “What did we not ask that we should have?”

Six question areas with detailed subquestions (probing questions) were also presented to Academy personnel focus group participants. The focus group protocols for Academy personnel and the Academy personnel handouts are included in the Appendices. The topics addressed were:

1. Sexual Assault—discussion of the incidence rates for men and women from the 2012 SAGR survey, knowledge of where incidents were most likely to occur, thoughts on victims experiencing multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact over time, role of “sexting” and pornography, and the role alcohol plays in unwanted sexual contact.
2. Sexual Harassment/Sexist Behavior—discussion of the sexual harassment and sexist behavior incidence rates from the 2012 SAGR survey, possible relationships among these unwanted gender-related behaviors and the potential impact of addressing verbal behaviors and possibly reducing unwanted sexual contact, whether cultural factors (e.g., attitudes of disrespect toward women) contributed to unwanted sexual contact, and recommendations for decreasing sexual harassment and sexist behavior.
3. Reporting—discussion of why, even with all of the emphasis on unwanted sexual contact and zero tolerance, students are still reluctant to report their experiences; potential reasons for not reporting; and recommendations to remove barriers to reporting.
4. Roles and Responsibilities—perceptions about the role of Academy personnel with respect to preventing and responding to unwanted sexual contact, interactions they have with students on these issues, interactions with the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) staff, and recommendations for helping students better deal with issues.
5. Cultural Change—discussion of approaches the Academy might take to improve unwanted sexual contact prevention and response by changing the culture and

- attitudes toward this issue, how such change could be made, and thoughts on the usefulness of a Dignity and Respect Code.
6. Additional Recommendations—what more the Academy could do to decrease sexual assault and sexual harassment.<sup>2</sup>

### ***Conducting the Focus Groups***

For the 2013 SAGR, DMDC conducted 40 focus groups, scheduled in 90-minute sessions at each Academy. Student focus groups were conducted by gender and class year with one mixed-gender session. DMDC conducted 29 focus groups of students across all three DoD Service Academies and USCGA: 8 groups at USMA including 64 cadets, 7 groups at USNA including 71 midshipmen, 7 groups at USAFA including 76 cadets, and 7 groups USCGA including 89 cadets. In total, DMDC collected attitudes and opinions from 300 Academy students. In addition, three focus groups were conducted at USNA, USAFA, and USCGA for faculty, coaches and activity leaders, and military cadre. At USMA the majority of athletic staff are contractors so only two focus groups were conducted with faculty and Officer Representative/Officer in Charge (OR/OIC) staff members. In total, comments from these groups represent the attitudes and opinions of 113 faculty and staff (22 at USMA, 24 at USNA, 35 at USAFA, and 32 at USCGA). Focus groups were held in closed-door conference rooms or classrooms on each Service Academy campus.

DMDC employed moderated focus groups with trained focus group facilitators leading single- or dual-moderated sessions. Facilitators followed a structured, approved, script to ensure topics were covered in an adequate amount of time and conversations were appropriately contained. A male facilitator led the male focus groups and a female facilitator led the female focus groups. Both a male and female facilitator led the sessions for Academy personnel. DMDC provided a female recorder who used a stenographic machine to transcribe all comments from participants and the facilitator. No audio or video recording was made of any focus group session.

All focus group sessions were governed by a number of ground rules, most notably that they were all non-attribution sessions. Participants were advised of the purpose for the recorder, and they were informed that their names were not recorded and their comments would not be attributed back to them. Participants were encouraged to provide information generally but not to specify personal experiences, names, or other identifying details. They were also advised not to share information learned within the focus groups after the session was concluded.

### ***Analysis Methodology***

Data from the focus groups were analyzed qualitatively for major themes and ideas conveyed across the sessions. The order of presentation does not imply that any one theme is more important than any other. For each theme, supporting comments from the focus group

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<sup>2</sup> The focus groups concluded with an open invitation to express any other thoughts regarding gender-related issues at the Academy and any additional recommendations for ways the Academy could reduce sexual assault and sexual harassment. These recommendations are not reported separately; rather they are integrated with other discussion points on similar topics.

participants are included. The supporting comments do not include every comment made on a particular theme; rather they illustrate the theme in the words of the participants. No attempt was made to quantify the number of comments made on a specific theme.

The results in this study are based on qualitative analysis—findings cannot be generalized to all students at each of the Academies. Findings should be viewed as illustrations of situations and themes for consideration by Academy officials as they review their programs. Findings may also be viewed as a general perspective on participants' views of sexual harassment and assault at their Academies, but they do not portray a statistical report on incidence rates or performance of response and prevention programs.

### ***Categorization of Topics***

Focus group analysts reviewed transcripts to identify major themes. DMDC analyzed approximately 60 hours of transcripts from 40 focus groups. All comments were grouped into themes during initial review. Although findings tended to cluster around the main questions asked in the sessions, categorization based on the questions was not a set requirement. Analysts were sensitive to themes that emerged from the discussions. Analysts used a combination of topical coding and repeated reviews to gather specific comments that supported the emerging themes. Where participants differed in their opinions on a topic, both perspectives are presented in separate findings. Analysts used an iterative review process to extract and classify comments that included six different reviewers who verified that themes were supported by comments.

### ***Organization of Findings***

Findings are presented in separate chapters for students and Academy personnel for each Academy. Within chapters, the major themes are presented with specific findings and supporting comments from the participants. Each comment identifies the gender of the student and affiliation of the Academy personnel (Faculty, Military, or Athletic). Caution must be exercised in reviewing these findings because comments should not be viewed as representative of all other participants. Finally, although many of the themes are similar across the four Academies, each Academy should be viewed separately. No attempt was made to compare or generalize across Academies.

## **Chapter 2: U.S. Military Academy Cadets**

Eight cadet focus group sessions were conducted at USMA from March 25-29, 2013. Each session was scheduled for a 90-minute period. There was one male and one female session held for freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Each session had between three and eleven students.

### ***Sexual Assault***

The 2013 SAGR focus groups devoted a majority of the time to topics designed to gather students' perceptions on unwanted sexual contact (USC) and their recommendations for reducing the prevalence. In each topical area the facilitator made an effort to drive out causes for behaviors or situations being discussed and recommendations for improvement.

The discussions began by sharing with the participants the USC rates from the 2012 SAGR and asking whether cadets had seen those results. Cadets were asked to discuss why the rates have increased across the past four survey years. Additional questions were posed for their knowledge of where incidents were most likely to occur, their thoughts on victims experiencing multiple incidents of USC over time, and the role of "sexting" and pornography. Cadets further contributed comments on the role alcohol plays in USC and when during the day it is more likely to occur.

### ***Familiarity with Incidence Rates from 2012 SAGR***

- **Cadets voiced a range of opinions about the USC rate such as not knowing the results, surprise it has gone up over the years, never hearing about incidents, the pervasive nature of USC, and that the rate is probably much higher at civilian schools.**
  - “[Group consensus had not seen the results of the survey.]” (Males)
  - “They talk about it in SHARP briefs but we've never seen percentages I think.” (Male)
  - “I think the thing that surprised me the most was over the past six years how it almost doubled for men.” (Male)
  - “Men are kind of accepting of the fact that that might be happening to them so they're reporting it more [on the survey]. And how they perceive it I guess. If I punched him in the crotch, some person may think that's unwanted sexual – yeah, it's unwanted but some people might take it a different way. I know someone who got kicked out because he was joking with his roommate and then his roommate turned him in for sexual harassment or something, but it wasn't intended to be.” (Male)

- “When these things happen my concern is are they being at all like hushed up? I think if we wanted to raise awareness and like say that this is a problem, why isn't it being publicized when it does happen. Even anonymously.” (Male)
- “It's going to be much lower [than civilian schools]. I mean even when we go visit other schools you see it way more often than you see it here. And that might be just because they party more, there's more drugs and alcohol involved, but it's significantly higher.” (Male)
- “It's really smaller [the rate for men], but just to think that it happens at all is weird. When you say sexual assault or like contact, it's always geared towards women.” (Female)
- “If you take this same survey and put it out in a normal college campus, the results would probably be double or triple ours. Yeah, it's here and it's going to be everywhere and you can't really get rid of it because it only gets better with time because it's our culture, but it's been established in the past. It's not really that astounding in comparison to a normal college campus. It's actually pretty good.” (Female)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist to better inform cadets of the prevalence of USC from both actual reported incidents and survey results.</li> <li>◆ DMDC can work with the Academies to prepare a briefing or handout of 2012 SAGR and future survey results tailored to that Academy.</li> <li>◆ The Academy can use the results of the 2012 SAGR survey to generate discussion during sexual assault training sessions.</li> <li>◆ Engaging students in discussions and problem solving helps give them a sense of ownership of the solution.</li> <li>◆ The CASHA program might be an effective vehicle for improved communications about the issue of USC in general, such as an awareness campaign followed by development of strategies to improve prevention and response.</li> </ul>

- Cadets indicated that the USC rate is higher than they would have expected.
  - “I hear a lot of things in the news about this type of thing but I think it's still higher than I expected. Just when you said one in ten, that put it in perspective to me. That shocked me.” (Female)
  - “I just feel like guys normally make jokes, they don't like touch you. Because I mean especially lately people have been really scared of doing that kind of stuff because of this whole focus on it. That's what I think.” (Female)
  - “I've just never had friends or anyone experience it so of course to me it seems like it never happens. I don't know any concrete proof. I know it's there, but I don't know anybody it's happened to.” (Female)
  - “Because it's a personal thing, it's not like they would do it in front of other people, it's not like something you would see in a classroom or something like that.” (Female)

- “*I think it shocks me a little bit, when I think about it I can rationalize, but it almost seems like the males here are so SHARP trained that they are afraid to even talk to us because of that fact. So during basic, for instance, you're getting patted down for ammo and they would be like ‘Permission to touch, can I come near you, can I come talk to you?’ So that shocked me, the guys here are really scared of that.*” (Female)
  - “*I think it's definitely higher also. I've never really seen any incidents of unwanted sexual contact, so to me it seems higher than I would have imagined.*” (Male)
  - “*I'd say it's higher than what I would have anticipated.*” (Female)
- Cadets noted that people might indicate on a survey that they experienced some form of USC as they think about the questions when they may not have reported it otherwise.
  - “*I think it comes down to when they're taking the survey, you had mentioned earlier that you don't think about it until you're sitting there reading it taking the survey. I mean now, having this conversation, I can think of situations that maybe I've been a little uncomfortable with that, but it's like whatever, I'm the kind of person that I don't really care, it's not that big of a deal to me. But if I was taking the survey, depending on the setting, I would sit down and say okay, well, maybe I would record that, but in fact to me it really wasn't that big of a deal.*” (Male)
- Cadets indicated that some people might be more likely to recognize that they experienced one of the USC behaviors as a result of their training and increased emphasis by the Academy.
  - “*I'd argue that the more emphasis you put on it, I'm not saying it's not happening but it makes people quantify things or think of it as unwanted touching when maybe before they didn't think of it that way, so maybe it was happening. Now, just because we are talking about it so much, ‘Oh, it did happen to me.’*” (Male)
  - “*I think that does makes sense just because I've never known what is considered sexual assault or harassment, and we have been getting briefings on it a lot more. And you just start realizing what is considered that and even if it does make you uncomfortable, I've never realized that you can consider some actions sexual harassment or sexual assault. So I feel like some of the numbers have probably inflated, but I feel like it may be because people actually know what is harassment or assault just because we have been briefed on it a lot more here in the past year or so. I don't remember getting briefed on it a lot when I came here, but they've started briefing more and I feel like we started knowing more what you would call sexual assault or harassment.*” (Female)

- Cadets indicated that progress has been made toward increasing awareness about USC prevention and should help lower incidence rates going forward.
  - “*We've seen an increase in briefs and just a general awareness of what this really is. And I think that has added to some of the increase. I think that if those briefs continue over time, at least within a period of four years, if you start out as a plebe [freshman] and actually get solid briefs that this is what this means, by the time that plebe is a firstie [senior], you're going to see less, at least from my understanding and experience you're going to see less. It really started for our class, I think second semester last year is pretty much when we started getting actually solid briefs on what this is. And since then yes, you may have seen a slight increase, but I also think that it's going to start decreasing because once people are aware, once people know what a certain thing is, what the definition is, they're going to be a lot more cautious to do anything. I think that West Point and the different academies – if they're going to continue this – are on a really good, positive path, and in the next couple of years you're going to see a decrease.*” (Female)

### ***Location of Unwanted Sexual Contact***

- Some cadets indicated that they feel safe from sexual assault on campus.
  - “*I feel like they generally are very safe, in my opinion. I don't think that there's anything that we're doing wrong or we could do better. There are rules in place. I've never felt unsafe.*” (Female)
  - “*It's [campus] one of the only places that you go running after dark and feel completely safe, to be honest.*” (Female)
- Cadets indicated that USC is most likely to occur in the dormitory, especially if alcohol is involved.
  - “*Barracks.*” (Multiple Males and Females)
  - “*Because you're watched everywhere else. Because the barracks is the only place that you can be alone pretty much where no other people are watching.*” (Female)
  - “*The barracks is the only place where you could get someone alone.*” (Female)
  - “*I think it's extremely easy to get a private place. You just close your door [in the dorm].*” (Male)
  - “*Girls' barracks. First years take passes and they come back after taps and everything, and in the weekends alcohol most of the time is involved. So coming back late at night and the fact that we do live in close quarters a lot does make a lot of sense of why it does happen around the Academy grounds. It's so easy to*

*find a girl's room, especially with name tags and stuff, they know their company, and things happen.”* (Female)

- “*It makes sense for the first two years. You can't leave campus really, so that's logical. But it's not like we have a frat row, like some area, or off campus housing. So yes, odds are it's the dorms.*” (Male)
- “*I think part of the reason it's in the barracks, it's where we live, it's where we work. It's not like we go home and have our separate place. Everything centers around the barracks. I myself feel fine in the barracks but it could happen because that's where the cadets spend the majority of the time. Underclassmen can't leave on the weekend so they're still in the barracks.*” (Female)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ Although most comments indicated a general feeling of safety in the dormitories, additional surveillance and security policies (i.e., locked door policies) might be helpful in preventing incidents.
- ◆ Raising awareness among cadets that many of the unwanted behaviors occur right in their own living area might generate greater attention to surroundings and watching out for each other (greater bystander intervention in cadets' living area).

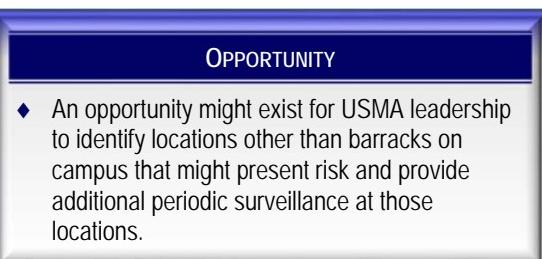
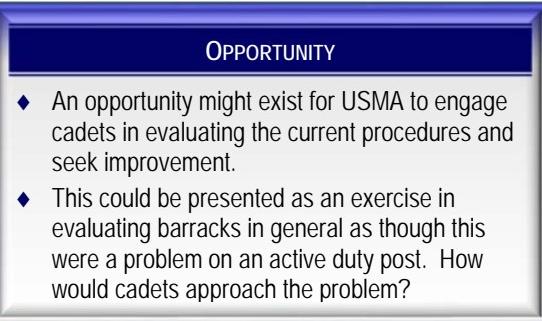
- **Cadets noted that the rules have changed on keeping doors open.**

- “*I haven't really felt unsafe. But an unlocked door, it's a freshman tradition. I think a lot of times women in any XYZ cases that come out or sexual assault cases, nine times out of ten in my opinion somebody wasn't doing something right. The Academy does a pretty good job of setting up serious rules and restrictions that prevent things like this from happening. If you do what you're supposed to do, it helps prevent that stuff. It doesn't work every time, but I think it's assuming that you do that all the time – I think it's a good help for prevention.*” (Female)
- “*There's a rule that if someone is in your room, even if they are a female or a male, it doesn't matter, if someone is in your room that's not your roommate, you have to have your door propped open with the trash can. And I don't think anyone follows that rule really. Very few people follow that so that doesn't surprise me much.*” (Female)
- “*I think it helps when you have a drunken person coming back or whatever. We had one incident with my company where this person was knocking stuff off the wall and treading in people's rooms. So in this case I think the locked door helps.*” (Female)
- “*And I know plebe year it wasn't a big deal to lock your door, and now they're really strict about locking your door after taps and stuff, but that's probably a way to prevent things from happening in the barracks.*” (Female)

- “It’s now like the doors can be open like 12 to 18 inches – it almost benefits girls more. We had a really small group because there’s a limited number of people that go through it [my major], and honestly it’s a high proportion of females, so when you’re studying with them it’s awkward to have the door open at 90 degrees, so that everyone that walks by is looking in. You have that now the door can be like 85 percent closed; it almost benefits the girls more. Less awkward. It’s like equalization. It makes it not abnormal to have a girl and a guy working together on an assignment; it makes it more the status quo. [The policy is gender neutral now?] Right.” (Male)
- **Cadets had mixed attitudes about the effectiveness of cadet surveillance in the dormitories.**
  - “It’s not really close to your room necessarily.” (Male)
  - “And they come around and check the rooms at taps. And so one concern is drunk firsties could come back late at night and go into a plebe’s room. So you’re supposed to lock your door and sometimes they’ll come and check that they’re locked. Because that’s something that’s supposed to happen.” (Male)
  - “I’d say precautions have been taken for those kinds of instances, though, because the CCQ [Cadet Charge of Quarters] is a position that yearlings [sophomores] have to take responsibility for. And basically it’s a patrol in the hallway constantly on the weekends. And I know that if I’m awake at one o’clock and I hear everyone coming back from the first year, wherever they went out and were drinking or having a good time, they’re allowed but there’s generally always a group of, at least in my company, of other people who were in the barracks to help people get back to their rooms. And the CCQ person will be watching. And I think someone’s room has been mitigated by that just because there are some people around. I don’t know how your companies are. It’s always like social hour before taps.” (Female)
  - “I really think that West Point does all that it can do to prevent this because they really try to have a lot of things. But without completely overtaking everything we do, monitoring us all the time, if somebody is bad enough of a person I guess to do this, they’re going to find a way to do it.” (Female)
  - “I don’t think anything like more cameras in the hallway or more locking of the doors or more opening of the doors to make sure people aren’t in there alone, I think that gets on an invasion of privacy. We already don’t have a lot of privacy as it is.” (Female)
  - “And my guess is that it doesn’t even actually happen when we’re supposed to be watching on the weekend, I bet it happened at normal business hours. I don’t know why somebody would want to wake up at three o’clock in the morning. When I was on the CCQ no one is awake at three o’clock in the morning; that

*very rarely would happen. So I would think it happens at times that there isn't a presence.”* (Male)

- “*They do have cameras in the halls. If something happens, they can pull tapes.”* (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that there is room for improvement in the CCQ responsibilities regarding surveillance, especially when the CCQ is responsible for multiple floors.**
  - “*And especially in some buildings where a company is broken up into three buildings, CCQ is in one building. So if you go up a floor, first of all, he's not going to see you. If you go to a floor in a different building, there's no way the CCQ is going to leave the building, come to your building and go to your floor. Most people are usually lazy and are doing homework and watching movies.”* (Male)
  - “*I'm not going to go open people's doors; that wasn't my job. If something happened I was the first line of response or whatever, but in my opinion and my experience, I think I was pretty much useless, I just sat there.”* (Male)
- **Cadets indicated the rise in USC rates for USMA may have been influenced by the fact that cadets are restricted to campus.**
  - “*Policies that force people to stay here might cause better odds for it to happen. I think the probability of something like this happening at West Point is higher when you have to stay here. It's hard to say, it comes in random waves [changes in policies]. Like how long your leave is and whatnot.”* (Male)
- **Cadets indicated there are locations other than the barracks on campus and in field training where USC might occur, though none were noted as particularly dangerous.**
  - “*I think part of the reason you assume that it happens in the barracks is because we're freshmen, we're not allowed to go to the Firstie Club [on campus club for seniors] or the Cow Club [on campus club for juniors], where there always seems to be a lot of alcohol involved, when people are going out and having a good time. I feel like a lot*



*of that could happen there. Or in transition to and from the barracks.”* (Male)

- “*There are a lot of clubhouses in the team rooms and stuff like that. I know that my clubhouse is right next to the Firstie Club. And if no one was actually in the building, it would be like a perfect place to go. It's away from everything.*” (Male)
  - “*I know there are rooms in the basement, there's a day room and things like that where a lot of people don't go often. I'm pretty sure there are a lot of places like that at West Point that we really don't know about. Either way, you're going to find a way to go somewhere if you really want to.*” (Female)
  - “*We have the First Gear, which is our bar and both of those clubs there that you can drink at, and I could see stuff happening there too.*” (Female)
  - “[Field training] I mean you definitely have more opportunity to. You can probably find more privacy, I suppose. There's usually an officer, an NCO around, cadet chain of command, at least most of the time. And when you're in the field you're out in the sticks, so you just set up your campsite. But there are pretty strong measures there too, like somebody with night vision goggles and stuff to make sure nobody is sneaking off together and stuff like that.” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated other locations off campus where USC might occur.**
    - “*The city. You can take like a pass on a weekend, you go out with a group of friends.*” (Male)
    - “*When some cadets went on ID to DC, they rented out an entire building at American University and just put all the cadets in one building. So it was just like the barracks, except for there's no supervision.*” (Male)
    - “*I think maybe also on trip sections when we go on trips with certain clubs or whatever, and in those situations too the barrier between upperclassmen and lower classmen is kind of taken away. And most trip sections here there's a certain duty part that you have to be at the majority, well, not the majority of the time, but a lot of time you are free to do whatever, act however you want. I think they probably consider that too.*” (Female)
    - “*During the summer, just depending on what your training package is in the summer, you could end up at another Army installation, that there may or may not be other cadets there. I was at a fort for a few weeks last summer. They put us up at a hotel. There were probably 40 cadets there. So I guess in circumstances like that something could have happened there. But I don't think anything did.*” (Male)

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to increased CCQ responsibilities to help ensure cadets' safety, particularly when on trips.

- Cadets indicated some USC incidents might occur during summer training for plebes.
  - “Our second summer where we're at Camp Buckner, I could totally imagine it happens there because I know there's people doing weird things in the woods. It's probably like you're stuck here for four weeks or however long, some people are here even longer, so I'm sure there's a sexual tension that builds up and then that's what causes these issues.” (Male)
  - “Our plebe year, the drivers of the trucks they were hitting on a few girls. So I guess that was an issue. We're not allowed to talk to them.” (Male)
  - “Because there are enlisted soldiers, they drive us or be our lane walkers for certain events, and they are all about our age. Around our age. So I guess, yeah, you could see that happening.” (Male)
- Cadets indicated alcohol is a contributing factor in most USC.
  - “I figured it would be higher [the percentage of unwanted sexual contact incidents where alcohol was involved]. I feel as though cadets who don't learn how to drink responsibly, they're just suddenly at the age of 21, they're told okay, we can drink and they just go binge drinking every Thursday night with their friends and come back wasted. They never learn to take it slow, drink responsibly, take four or five beers and stop or two, three and stop.” (Male)
- Cadets had mixed thoughts on ways to control use of alcohol.
  - “I think they should seriously consider allowing sophomores to drink. There are tons of people who went to college before this or they're prior service and they were drinking perfectly fine. They come here and they're told that they don't know, they can't handle it, they don't know how. You have to be 75 miles away [to drink if 21].” (Male)
  - “My opinion is we are so restricted on the drinking policy that those of us who are of age, really, Thursday night, Friday night, Saturday night are really the only nights that you can go drink. So when people are going out to just have a casual beer, I'm just going with the guys to just sit down and have a beer, just a conversation, just hang out. It's more like I'm going there to push myself to that limit. So you're not going out with the intent of having just like fun, your intent is with getting drunk. So I think that plays into it.” (Male)

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ The use of alcohol as a factor in USC is a pervasive finding. An opportunity might exist to continue to raise awareness of the relationship between alcohol and sexual assault.

- Cadets indicated that adding more rules about alcohol use would only complicate enforcement and not solve the problem.
  - “*I think if those rules are actually followed, then these statistics would be mitigated, but I think it's a problem with actually enforcing the rules. And maybe there's so many that people get exacerbated with them.*” (Female)
  - “*I think it's hard to try to make that better at the moment because here the more policies they add on and the more rules they add on, it just makes it complicated and it makes it harder for people to try to solve the problem. So the fact that you can't be in a room with someone without the door open or something like that makes people almost want to break it. And it's almost a failure on maybe the roommates or people who are around because they probably notice but we're too afraid to say anything because it's an upperclassman or someone in their chain of command. That's a big factor here I feel like.*” (Female)

### **Time When Incidents Occur**

- Cadets indicated they never really have any off duty time.
  - “*At West Point you're throwing academics, you're throwing sports, you're throwing a military job, you're throwing a social life, you're throwing your hobbies all into one giant location. So when you're asking when and where things happen, the barracks is our office, our classroom, our office, our academy institution and our room all rolled into one. Unless you put your foot down and say 'Hey, dude, it's midnight, I'm not working on that anymore,' people are going to say 'I need you to sign this, I need you to fill this out, do this for me.'*” (Male)
  - “*Here it's professional all the time but cadets don't get that sense that professional during the day and evenings it's not really professional. So living in a*

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist to articulate a clear set of rules and the objectives for making the Academy the safest environment possible, then engage cadets in the application of those rules.</li> <li>◆ USMA can provide a clear explanation of rules and objectives with freshmen to help shape their attitudes early on and carry through when they are upperclassmen.</li> </ul>

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Although it is true that most of the time active duty personnel have more of a distinct personal time after duty hours, military personnel are expected to live to a high standard even in their personal lives.</li> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist to acknowledge that cadet life is difficult, but that cadets are training to be professionals, so it is important to control their behavior at all times and learn to be responsible – professionalism is not an on/off condition.</li> <li>◆ USMA could convene a working group of cadets and TACs to address the stressors of cadet life and suggest additional avenues for relieving stress without going to excess.</li> </ul>

*professional world all the time is I don't think very possible. In the military there is a professional workday and then you go home. And here it's professional all the time.”* (Male)

- Cadets indicated that USC in the dorms could occur during daytime.
  - “*I feel like it also could happen if people have classes and you have an off hour and someone else has an off hour, you're maybe one of ten people in the barracks, especially in the divisions, there are probably ten people in the division during C hour [third period as an example]. So that could be also when it happens because no one else is around. During nighttime every single room has people in it, so if a female would shout out for help, she would get help.*” (Male)

### **Multiple Incidents of Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- Cadets shared diverse views on multiple offenders versus the same offender.
  - “*Is it based on sheer proportion, is it simply that there's fewer females here than males and that it's more likely that they'll come to unwanted sexual contacts with multiple males? That would be my assumption. If it's the same offender, it's an entirely different issue, in my opinion.*” (Male)
  - “*I think that it's more likely that an offender would try to go for multiple people. There's examples, like a senior in a company that has made passes at most of the plebe girls. And they all have this uncomfortable feeling around him. That's a possibility because they feel like they can get away with it. But I'm not sure about one person having multiple people come on. I don't think there are a lot of males here like that.*” (Female)
  - “*My guess would be that it's just one person trying to see how far he can get.*” (Male)
  - “*I think it depends on your reaction too. If someone touches you and you don't want to be like that girl and freak out about it, or if you don't let them know 'Hey, that's not cool, don't do it,' I think it can progress and they'll keep testing the waters until you realized it's bothered you the whole time. You almost have to make that character judgment and decide in your mind if you think it's worth it. And because we are so outnumbered by the males. When I hear someone make a joke about something and I tell a male, and they're like 'Oh, no, he's just joking, just ignore him.' And that just keeps going and going. Maybe I am overreacting. So I don't know what to do when everybody else seems to be okay with it.*” (Female)
  - “*Because you feel like you're responsible if you let it go before [hence it continues or escalates].*” (Female)
  - “*Honestly I think in the opposite direction. I honestly think that it's probably a balance between both. I think it's likely that someone would be the same person,*

*and I also think it's likely that a different person would happen just because – there are less women here than guys.”* (Female)

- *“It might not be a progression of necessarily the same two people, but maybe the individual that is committing the sexual assault to one other person will progress in their aggression over time, I think that might be possibly it.”* (Female)
- *“Maybe from the same offender, that offender could realize what the victim's limits are and how far they can go.”* (Female)
- **Cadets indicated some offenders might have misread signals from the victim; that people hear what they want to hear, situations are very ambiguous, and some people are immature with regard to interpersonal skills.**
  - *“Maybe they have a pattern of putting themselves in dangerous situations.”* (Male)
  - *“Part of that, it might be their personality, they may just have an outgoing personality, that their intentions get mistaken.”* (Male)
  - *“I think if the person allows it the first time and he doesn't get the message across that it's unwanted, then the offender progresses further and further to see what the person can get away with.”* (Male)
  - *“I think that's very true. Just from personal experience and what you are talking about with troop sections when that line becomes blurred, the guys, and it could be females too obviously from the other data, have a hard time distinguishing between the female might be scared to say something if they are an upperclassman or they're in a position, and so they pass off the unwanted sexual touching as 'I brushed him off, he'll get the hint, it's not a problem.' And the next time they come off with the next thing. 'Oh, they got the hint this time, it's okay.' And all of a sudden that escalates quickly and I think that's where the data comes from.”* (Female)
  - *“I think as far as the multiple incidents per one person, obviously it's not that person's fault if there's unwanted sexual contact, but in a sense they need to draw the line more clearly too. Because if you don't clearly like draw the line, you give an inch they take a mile. And then if that's not your manner, if you're very soft spoken about it or aren't very assertive about it, then they'll come back and do it again. Just reinforcing what you say.”* (Female)
  - *“It's also a small school, so you can develop a reputation, if something happened might, people might hear about it, that could draw somebody to do something they wouldn't do otherwise.”* (Male)
  - *“Something to do with the ambiguity of the situation. Obviously for legal purposes the consent has to be expressed, it's not like implied consent. She didn't say no, that doesn't mean that you have the go ahead. I think on a practical level*

*that just doesn't happen in many cases. And so both for healthy sexual relationships, you might say, and unhealthy ones, you don't have a contract do you want to engage in sexual relations with me before the sex act? You just start taking off your clothes and you read body language." (Male)*

- Cadets noted that while a victim should never be held responsible for USC, some behaviors are risky.

— *"It starts to seem like the victim's fault for not being assertive, which I think is also something that we have to look over that because they're like don't blame the victim. I think it's a serious thing for a person to be able to draw that line. If you go too far into that culture you're not going to take responsibility for yourself. And I think that's really dangerous." (Female)*

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to emphasize that if cadets adopt a more professional attitude when it comes to unwanted gender-related comments, people who exhibit improper attitudes and behaviors would more clearly stand out against that backdrop.

— *"And it is a danger. Now you wear a seatbelt in the car because you are mitigating the risk of being injured if you have an accident. So you play your conversations correctly to make sure that you are assertive enough too and you're independent enough so that the male knows that there's boundaries here, there are things that I can't do that she's not going to allow and she's serious about it. So it takes two to dance in this situation." (Female)*

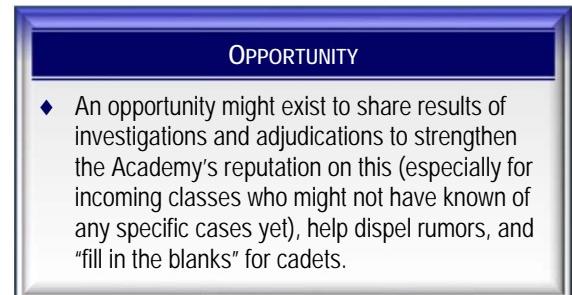
— *"If they're known for being flirtatious." (Female)*

— *"Here at West Point there's a supply and demand issue. So some girls, they feel like they have a hold on cadet men, so they put themselves in a situation and then it goes too far on them and then it becomes unwanted. Girls here, I feel like they somewhat set themselves up to be in a situation." (Male)*

- Cadets indicated women at the Academy in general are likely to say "No" when unwanted behaviors occur.

— *"I think on the whole the population here is pretty outgoing. The Academy is pulled from a very outgoing group of people and it's much more selective for females than males. It comes down to the congressional nomination process, you have the interviews. The females we get here are often very, very outgoing and on the most part I don't think that they are soft-spoken, like take it and don't say anything. If they have a problem I feel like here, more than anywhere, they would be more likely to actually say 'No, I don't want that.' Not to say that it's extremely likely but it would be more likely here than other places." (Male)*

- Cadets indicated some offenders might believe they can get away with USC because it would be just one person's word against another.
  - “It comes down to it could be one person's word against another. So that almost provides a security for the offender [because they believe nothing is ever going to happen because even if they accuse me it's just her word against mine].” (Male)
  - “I think that's especially true for upperclassmen with plebes because they know if anything happens, the upperclassman's word will most likely be taken much stronger than a plebe.” (Male)
  - “Also if the upperclassman wants to paint a trail of this person being a bad cadet, they could do that. Multiple negative CORs, little things, room failures over and over again, something like that, you can say this person doesn't care, they're untrustworthy. Even if that's not necessarily the case.” (Male)
- Cadets consistently indicated that offenses are dealt with seriously.
  - “The moment that you think you're going to get caught, you don't do it. Because even people who are stupid enough to do that kind of stuff, they still realize that if you get caught you're in trouble. That's the reason why having more presence and stuff would stop it, because once you're afraid of getting caught, you don't do anything.” (Male)
  - “Even an accusation in the military is like a huge black mark.” (Male)
  - “It could be extremely detrimental to your career in the Army, so they take things like that very seriously.” (Female)
  - “I think if it actually is reported they're very good about making sure that they're punished, making sure it doesn't happen again, making sure that the victim is okay and is recovering and stuff like that. Because they take it very seriously. It's just a matter of people actually reporting it.” (Female)
  - “I have the sense that if it's a case of sexual assault and not of fraternization, the offender would have the idea that if I get caught it will be a big deal. Because we have so many briefings and so much training during the summer about sexual assault that I think the idea is it will be cracked down pretty hard if you are caught.” (Male)



- Cadets indicated that rank structure influences decisions about standing up to unwanted behaviors.
  - “It’s very true. I would be afraid to say something to an upperclassman because they have a lot of influence over our first line supervisors and our sergeants and things like that. They control our grades, they control our military grades, that is what gives us our summer opportunities, what gives us our graduation opportunities for branching. If you have a bad military grade you won’t get the branches you want. And that supervisor or his friends in the company can make your life hell basically. Because they’re very close knit.” (Female)
  - “It’s generally going to be an upperclassman having an issue with an underclassman, whether it’s a plebe or a yuk [sophomore], but it’s mostly going to be that kind of relationship. The most generalized thing I could think of is just the upper class preying on the younger. They know they have rank, they know they have all this power compared to the younger classmen, so they see that advantage and they take advantage of that. I actually don’t know anything about the real Army, how the sexual assault and all that stuff goes on there, but I’m pretty sure it has to do something with rank, because the more advantage they have, the more of a chance to get that connection to get away.” (Female)

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to remind cadets that it is never acceptable for a person in authority to coerce others into unwanted sexual activities.

### **Sexting, Pornography, Flirting, and Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- Cadets indicated that certain behaviors, such as sexting, might contribute to different expectations about relationships.
  - “As far as sexting, I guess it could be because I could just see someone seeing how far they could go in the conversation and the other person be like ‘Okay, that’s a little too far.’” (Female)
  - “If people are doing it then there might be a gray area between what’s okay and what’s like flirty or what’s seen as that’s not okay. So I could see it potentially leading into issues like that.” (Female)
- Cadets had mixed perceptions about pornography and USC.
  - “From what I heard when they took down the web sites, the rate [USC] went down, that’s what I heard. The web sites, so you couldn’t watch porn at all, and I guess they took it away. From what I heard the rates went down.” (Male)
  - “It has to do with the distance of cadets from your peers at other universities. You’re going to have sex or you’re going to watch pornography because you have

*some type of sexual tension that can't be released while you're here at West Point, so you have to do it through a different media [vicariously]. If I was at a normal university and I could get consensual sex with someone else, I probably wouldn't be watching porn or something like that." (Male)*

### **Cadet Recommendations**

- **Evaluate the effectiveness of the CASHA program as a tool for discussing issues.**
  - *"Quote/unquote trained is the key word. They sit in a class, two class periods, now you are a trained CASHA rep. I think it makes sense but I think someone hit on it earlier, it's like a check the box thing, we're doing something to solve sexual assault. How much is that actually doing, I guess that's for you to decide." (Male)*
  - *"The CASHA reps in my company, I feel like no one in my company would ever go to, and they used it as a pad my resume kind of thing. It's volunteer but at the same time they are going to put it on something and say I was it. I volunteered to do this." (Male)*
  - *"My friend is the CASHA representative and nothing happened. And the other one is a plebe and I don't think any upperclassman would want to go to a plebe and say I've been sexually harassed, would you help me." (Male)*
- **Allow the CASHA program to mature.**
  - *"Most of the guys probably can't see the effects of CASHA because it's a year old. But the difference is instead of people from the top doing it, they're trying to use cadets to try to fix it. And right now it's still in the early stages so it's hard to do, but I think they are making steps in the right direction. I don't know how much of a change they have made so far. I know they've been able to help people that may not have been helped if they weren't there. But it's only like two or three cases. But still, two or three cases is more than zero. So they do right now have a small faculty, but I think once everything gets moving and there's a foundation, it will help a lot." (Male)*
  - *"I don't know how the CASHA system works, but I think just to keep building on that, I think that's the best way too. Because I'm more likely to want to talk to a peer than to a superior officer. I think just building on that and improving it, maybe more*

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Suggestions about the CASHA program could be evaluated by program leaders, such as making the position voluntary and seeking people who truly want the position.</li><li>◆ Another opportunity is to constantly evaluate the effectiveness of the program by cadets themselves – are they using it, what would they do differently, has it been helpful to them, etc.</li><li>◆ Also, provide this feedback to the Corps so they know their suggestions and criticisms were heard and acted on – this would help establish the credentials of the program if it is modified by the comments cadets provide.</li></ul>

*representatives per company. And then having a good efficient way for them to report up higher.” (Female)*

- “*CASHA reps are allowed to give them advice but not allowed to hear their story because once they hear their story, it automatically becomes an unrestricted report because they're not professionals. That's why it's their job to tell them what a restricted report is and then give them the choice of what they want to do. It's easier for them to go to a peer to talk about what happened, what the options are, than go to an officer.” (Female)*
- “*I think CASHA and victims' advocates are awesome. I can't speak to the SARC only because I've never had to use them, and I haven't really heard of specific incidents of what they have done. I know that everyone in my company has their number and can call them if they need to.” (Male)*
- “[CASHA members should be selected by the TACs.] *I see you are a respected member of our company, everyone likes you, you have a lot of friends, you're a nice guy, you're sympathetic, will you do this eight-hour training and get this qualification? Versus people self-selecting or someone going he doesn't have a lot on his plate, let's toss it to him.* (Male)
- “*I think the CASHA that was created was an interesting step because you're bringing a cadet, they're trained, and they also volunteer for the position, it's another person that you could contact that you may feel more comfortable as compared to a TAC officer.” (Female)*
- **Provide a CASHA representative of both genders from each class year to make it more comfortable for cadets to discuss issues.**
  - “*We do have representatives for cadets against sexual harassment and assault. But they're not from every class, they're from an upper class. Which makes sense because it's a leadership position that an upperclassman has to fill. But there's still enough of a barrier between plebes and upperclassmen, depending on how intensely that barrier is held in your company, some companies are more relaxed than others, that I think it would help if we had representatives from each class.”* (Male)
  - “*In my company the representatives – I don't know if we have multiple representatives, I only know of one, our CASHA representative, and she's a female. If we do have a male representative, I haven't seen him, I don't know who he is. So if there were to be an incident, the chances of someone like me going to the yuk who's a female and say this happened, I think that's pretty unlikely, just from a sheer pride standpoint. I think most guys would not go up to her.”* (Male)

- **Encourage cadets to be more assertive when they experience USC.**
  - “*I think it's embarrassment. Going back to the point of speaking of when it's happening, I think it's embarrassing that you might let something go that far that you really didn't want to happen, and you might not want to admit that weakness and say I wasn't strong enough to say no when this was happening. I think that the most effective thing is not knowing someone is going to come forward but just that person saying no on the spot. I think that's more effective than anything else.*” (Male)
- **Encourage cadets to stay with trusted friends to avoid risky situations.**
  - “*I feel like most incidents occur with alcohol at the Academy, so I would just make sure you are around people you trust. And when you go out and do things and when you are hanging out with friends, make sure you have a friend there that you trust.*” (Female)

### ***Sexual Harassment and Sexist Behavior***

This major section of the focus groups posed a hypothesis about the relationship of verbally offensive behaviors, such as sexual harassment and sexist comments, on USC. The facilitator began this section in a similar manner to the first section of the focus groups by sharing results from the 2012 SAGR on rates of sexual harassment and sexist behavior at the Academy over the past four surveys and hearing cadets' reactions. Cadets also provided thoughts on the subjective nature of these behaviors and why they are offensive to some and not to others. The facilitator then gave additional findings based on 2012 SAGR that those men and women who experienced USC in the past year also tended to experience sexual harassment and sexist behavior at higher rates. Cadets commented on the possible relationships among these unwanted gender-related behaviors and what the impact might be of addressing the verbal behaviors and possibly reducing USC. Following up, the facilitator asked if cultural factors, such as attitudes of disrespect toward women, contributed to USC. This section ended with a discussion of recommendations for decreasing sexual harassment and sexist behavior.

### ***Familiarity with Incidence Rates from 2012 SAGR***

- **Cadets expressed mixed opinions on whether sexual harassment incidence rates were high or low for USMA.**
  - “*Locker room talk is pretty strong here. It's pretty strong.*” (Male)
  - “*When I had initially thought of sexual harassment and how much I thought it occurred at the Academy, I wouldn't think 49 percent. But when I look at the*



*definition of it I think I can see how that number was. That's completely unsurprising to me.”* (Female)

- “*I'd say it's probably about what I would think because, as a human, we're mostly guys here, and so with that does come some inappropriate jokes and comments between the guys. And I can see it would offend women, and being a small portion you feel outnumbered and stuff, so that's why I would see it as more threatening to the women.”* (Male)
  - “*I am surprised that men are that high [sexist behavior]. I'm wondering what kind of sexist behavior men are experiencing. The only thing I can think of is because some standards for women are lower and because it's also so selective, they generally speak and perform very highly, especially like on physical tests. So in DPE, department of physical education, they may give their buddies crap, like ‘Oh, you're struggling in that class, I am acing it.’ It's a little different. There's some disparity because of different grading scales.”* (Male)
  - “*I think it's higher than I would have thought.”* (Female)
  - “*I think it's almost low, especially if you're in the sexist behavior, because our organization up until recently women weren't allowed to do the same roles that men were, the whole organization is sexist. Even my summer training, what I did last summer, girls aren't allowed to go to it because it's a male only role. It depends if you define it like that, which this number is incredibly low, versus if you're only talking about sexual coercion.”* (Male)
- **Cadets noted that sexist comments are viewed as offensive depending on the intent.**
    - “*It depends on the person who is saying the joke. It's their intent, their tone with it.”* (Male)
    - “*It's targeted I would say. If it's at someone in particular or at female cadets in general. If you just make a general joke about ‘trows,’ that's one thing. But if you say ‘Oh, so and so in my company, she's a real trow,’ well, that goes from there.”* (Male)
    - “*Once it's targeted it takes much more offense to the person.”* (Male)
    - “*I think there are a lot of ‘boys will be boys mentality,’ so I think it's like they'll nip it in the bud if they're around other women or other females or people that can potentially get upset or get them in*

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to help cadets understand that when offensive comments become the norm, it diminishes the higher standard expected of the Academy and cadets.
- ◆ An opportunity might also exist to help cadets develop techniques for dealing with people who express different values and attitudes.

*trouble, but as far as being around each other, the bro time, the man caves, I don't know what goes on in there but I feel it's a lot less controlled.”* (Female)

- **Cadets indicated unwanted sexual attention and associated comments might occur when cadets send mixed signals.**
  - “*I can see the unwanted sexual attention being fairly high just because some people just don't want to take no for an answer or they can't tell when the other party is giving them body language or implied signals that say no and they're just not picking up on it.*” (Male)
  - “*With the unwanted sexual attention, I know certain cadets, certain females and certain males, that dress I would say skimpy in the barracks. And maybe it's just that they just want to be comfortable walking in and out of their room, but I know certain people wearing short shorts or wearing really tight T shirts and stuff like that, sometimes some people take that as a calling that 'I'm available.'*” (Male)
- **Cadets had varied ideas about the cause of sexual harassment and sexist comments among men.**
  - “*Guys are almost as mean as girls. People say girls are so mean to each other, but guys, it's the same thing, especially the competitiveness. Like in the weight room – guys are all about talking themselves up.*” (Female)
  - “*If you don't play a varsity sport you're a wimp kind of thing, that could be something like that.*” (Male)
  - “*Or if you're so slow you should be on the girls track team.*” (Male)
  - “*Guys have a certain way that they talk to each other, just like girls talk to each other a certain way. So maybe if that individual hasn't experienced that type of culture then they would see it as unwanted sexual harassment or whatever. But I feel like it's locker room talk and some people just aren't used to it or they're just more sensitive to it. I don't think it's like 'Oh, let's make this kid feel really uncomfortable,' it's just the guy culture.*” (Female)
- **Although crude talk is pervasive, cadets understood the Academy has rules about offensive behaviors and they were sensitive to violating those rules.**
  - “*That could be more pervasive with teams, with most companies you are going to have a female at your table. SHARP is a constant reminder, even if you don't take it seriously, you know they will kick you out for it. It's serious for them.*” (Male)

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ♦ An opportunity might exist to emphasize the relationship between respectful language and professionalism.

- “*There's always an idea in the back of your mind like I need to watch what I say so I don't get a respect board.*” (Male)
  - “*I would say maybe all the SHARP training we get, maybe guys know what they can get in trouble for and what they can't. So if you can get away with making the sexist comments but you can't be brought up on sexual harassment for those kind of comments, maybe they see it as, since they don't get in trouble for it, it's okay, and they don't really realize the culture that it can create and it can be harmful. Unless it was a very blatant sexist remark, they could get EEO complaint, but they're not going to get charged for just saying something about women in general. So I think they probably think it's less serious.*” (Female)
- **Cadets did not indicate experiencing offensive behaviors in the form of hazing.**
  - “*I'm sure it was more prevalent in the past before anti hazing became the thing at the Academy under General Martin. People are scared of getting in trouble for hazing.*” (Male)
  - “*I haven't seen hardly any in my company.*” (Male)
  - “*People are scared of it.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated most people will usually stop offensive behavior when asked or confronted.**
  - “*Talking about where the emphasis needs to be – this is a mostly male institution. And I think that there are certain things that have become normalized just because we're around males all the time. So I think that if girls felt more comfortable saying ‘Hey, I'm not comfortable with that,’ we would actually be more receptive to it. I don't know what else DoD could do other than more educational stuff I guess would be good. But I think the most effective thing is hearing our female counterparts saying ‘Hey, I don't like when you do that or I don't like hearing that,’ I think that stuff is pretty effective.*” (Male)
  - “*I think if a female said it crossed the line they would probably stop, but if a dude said it, probably not.*” (Male)
  - “*I think they respond really well to that, whoever is speaking that way, whether it's a girl or a guy, are usually very receptive towards that, they'll accept your feelings, your opinion, and they stop.*” (Female)
  - “*Within my company if a guy said something around me and I said ‘Hey, that makes me feel uncomfortable, please stop,’ that I guarantee you they would stop it and that it wouldn't be continued. But that's just my company. It's a family thing.*”

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to continue the emphasis on diminishing offensive behavior so that it is not the norm and cadets will not become “numb” to it.

*If I said something bothered me, that would be all right, point taken, we're not going to do that anymore.” (Female)*

- “*If the chain of command and the TACs are hearing that, because a lot of times when this goes on the chain of command, the leadership is not around to hear this. But if they are and they don't feel like that is respectful or whatever, they have a responsibility as well to talk to that individual who's making those comments or those actions. But a lot of the times they're not there, so that's why I feel like a lot of times it's up to the individual to say that it's making them uncomfortable.” (Female)*
- **Cadets indicated whether or not someone finds a comment offensive depends on the setting and nature of the comment.**
  - “*I think a lot of guys here are very comfortable with us, so they speak their mind and they say what they are thinking, and I think it depends on the individual girl, how she perceives it.” (Female)*
  - “*I think too there's different girls will allow different levels of conversation to happen around them, if that makes sense. So I think that's really up to you. If you don't want to hear about it, then just say something. They're pretty close with us, so they'll respect that and be like 'I'll try and watch what I say.' So I think they're pretty respectful that way.” (Female)*
- **Some cadets do not make an effort to stop inappropriate comments.**
  - “*I think the reason the numbers are so high is no one really takes a step forward to try and stop those things from being said. They just look the other way and keep going.” (Male)*
  - “*I think it's more cadet responsibility. The vast majority of our conversation is going to be around each other and not in the presence of faculty. When you are in the presence of faculty and officers you are not hopefully going to be talking about stuff like that. It's cadets not having the courage to speak up and correct things when they're wrong.” (Female)*
- **Cadets who make offensive comments do not necessarily realize it is wrong.**
  - “*I don't think they see it as wrong, I think that it's become their way of thinking about things. Like where they started to just categorize us in their heads like that, and now that's just how they react to us out of habit. And then it's also the term*

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to facilitate discussions of how others view offensive language and jokes to help raise awareness and remind cadets that it is not tolerated.
- ◆ Discussions can also remind cadets that they can push back and act professionally to improve the culture and image of their Academy going forward.

*peer pressure. You have the one bad egg who will peer pressure everyone else. He'll say one thing and they all want to seem masculine and cool and go along with the group." (Female)*

- *"I think it would be an issue of people's character combined with different social norms from where they're from combining." (Male)*
- **Cadets indicated policies on reporting sexual harassment tend to be less well understood than policies on sexual assault.**
  - *"I think that one is harder because we actually hear stories of sexual assault and rape and that happening but we don't hear any anecdote of what sexual harassment would look like at the Academy. I know personally I don't really see it. You'll hear comments and the sexism that you were talking about is more common, but in terms of what I would report, sexual harassment, I honestly don't think I've seen. But people don't have a lot of awareness of maybe what constitutes it and what should be reported." (Female)*

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to add anecdotes of cases to the SHARP training to make it relevant to their environment and cadet life.
- ◆ USMA can also enhance training to include introductions of Academy officials who are designated to deal specifically with sexual harassment issues so the cadets can put a face to the program.

### ***Relationship to Unwanted Sexual Contact***

- **Cadets indicated sexist comments or sexual harassment might lead to USC.**
  - *"I think so. Sexual harassment can escalate to unwanted sexual contact." (Female)*
  - *"Perhaps allowing such a large amount of incidents, specifically for sexual behavior or sexist behavior to happen, it could cultivate a dominating feeling with the people that are doing it. Like, 'Okay, I can get away with this, maybe I can get away with sexual harassment and go to the next step.'" (Male)*
  - *"I don't know if it's a conscious progression, if they are consciously saying 'Okay, I'll see how they react to this and based on that then I'll gauge my activity and see how far I can push it.' At the very most if that's true I would say it's a subconscious trend. But I think more likely is that it's what they call the*

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist for training on the relationship among sexist comments, sexual harassment, and USC – denigrating the target to make further actions more tolerable, gateway activities, grooming the victim, "testing the waters" to see the limits of the target, and building up one's courage.

*grooming process. When we were kids and they warned us against sexual predators, they said it's a coach or teacher grooming you, they're trying to lead you down that path. But beyond that, I think that it's mostly just a progression as far as what leads to the assault. It's building tension until it finally happens.”*  
(Male)

- “*I think definitely the sexist mindset could escalate to the unwanted sexual contact. And I think that someone can enter into the Academy not really having that mindset of women, not having that negative view of women, but I think especially it's prominent in the military because since women – it's like a scientific word, we're not physically as fit, not as fit as men, you know what I am saying, there's a physical difference. And I think I saw it during Beast a lot. If the female is slowing down the squad because they're having a harder time carrying the ruck, it sparks that negative mindset, like why are the women in the military, our entire unit is slowed down. I can see the frustration with that. But I think that it's a catalyst to further thoughts on that subject, it just escalates from there because they're seeing this negativity and I think it's prominent in the military because of that physical difference, and a lot of the stuff we do in the military is physical.*” (Female)
  - “*It might be how they take the harassment. If they harass them and they don't say anything, and then they might come back and just escalate it more and more.*” (Male)
  - “*Because they're not afraid of getting caught, because they do one thing, they get away with it, then they keep pushing and keep pushing to see how far they can get.*” (Male)
  - “*It makes sense to me. For the harassment, you're not just going to go up to someone, you're probably going to talk to them first, and test the waters and see what you can get away with verbally or whatever before you try to do whatever physically.*” (Female)
  - “*There's a huge variance here between crude and offensive behavior and unwanted sexual attention and sexual coercion. The first one could be anything from joking around with your friends to the second and third are almost like gateway activities to sexual assault. I think for the unwanted sexual attention and sexual coercion those are mental or verbal lead-ins to attempted sex. They're kind of in the same category.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that sexist behavior is a function of the culture more than a predecessor to USC.**
    - “*So you're asking if that comes before sexual assault? No, it is culture.*” (Female)

- “*It is culture, because I know so many people that do it, I don't think it would ever go farther.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that addressing sexual harassment might create an atmosphere of respect where USC would be less likely to occur.**
  - “*I think it would because it would make it something you just don't think about as much. If you are not talking about it all the time, 91 percent [the percentage of those who experienced USC who also experienced sexist behavior during the past year], if you're not talking about it all the time then you're just not thinking about it all the time either. So they're less likely to do it. It's not like it's a bad option, it's just not an option.*” (Male)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ As noted earlier, fostering a culture where the cadets themselves “own the problem” can be effective in reducing or checking unwanted gender-related behaviors.</li> <li>◆ Discussions on the impact of sexual harassment can serve as an introduction to the team problem-solving environment cadets will experience as officers.</li> <li>◆ Presenting these issues as problem-solving opportunities rather than personal gripe sessions might reduce any repercussions or impact on one's reputation.</li> </ul>

- **Cadets indicated reducing sexual harassment and sexist behavior might not have much impact on reducing USC.**
  - “*I'm not sure necessarily [if there is a connection]. I think the fact that there's such a high connection between assault and harassment means that there's some male cadets who are just harassing and assaulting people.*” (Male)

### **Attitudes of Disrespect**

- **Cadets indicated that there is not a pervasive culture of disrespect for women.**
  - “*I don't think there's a culture of disrespect for women at all. You're always going to have a few guys who don't like that you're here, you're going to see them voice their opinions, but usually they do it pretty respectful in a way. But they're entitled to have their opinions. And the bottom line is that we are here. And I don't think there's an overwhelming culture that disapproves of us or our presence. Usually if you don't work hard and if you're just dead weight in the company, whether you're a guy or a girl we'll probably treat you the same way.*” (Female)
  - “*It doesn't matter if it's a guy or a girl, if you're pulling your weight or even if you're not as equal or as high as someone but they see that you're putting forth the effort, you're going to be respected and treated just fine, just equally. If you're guy or girl and you're not putting forth the effort – and it's visible that you're not trying at all – it's not necessarily disrespect, people are going to be like ‘Come on.’ Some people could take offense to the whole tough love type attitude, but there is that ‘Come on, we believe in you, but get up, go do it.’ And that's just the*

*military in general I think that's the attitude, just go do it, you gotta go do it. I mean that's why we signed up, that's why we're here. Not so we can sit back and go 'Well, I don't think today I'm going to put effort in, but maybe tomorrow.' It's just not how we're supposed to be or behave in any way." (Female)*

- **However, some male cadets exhibit disrespectful attitudes towards women.**

- *"It's easy to tell too that a lot of them don't respect women. We were doing a leadership challenge once, and it's usually male lieutenants that we discuss the things they do. One time it was a female lieutenant. And as soon as they popped up on the screen and started talking, you'd see guys in the corner laughing and snickering at what she was saying because she was a woman and the decision she made, even though a man would have made the same decision. And maybe it's the way she spoke or looked, but they just laughed. Or we once had a big briefing, and a female teacher was speaking, and they would just laugh at the things she would say, 'Okay.' But as soon as a man steps up there, it's different. So it's easy to see they don't respect a woman in the unit." (Female)*
- *"There was a lady who came last semester and talked to us about she was raped. There were actually a couple of guys in the row behind me snickering the entire time. And I was appalled because she was really upset about it obviously, she'd been raped. Most of the guys were very respectful, they were listening, but there's also those couple of guys that I don't know what's wrong with them." (Female)*
- *"I would absolutely argue against the idea that it's malicious, that we're looking down on women because they're women. I think it's more like being around an 80/20 ratio versus a normal 50/50 ratio. There are certain things that become normalized, we become used to that fact that we're acting like cavemen. I think it's more innocent. It's ignorance more than anything else." (Male)*

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ♦ An opportunity might exist to encourage all cadets, especially those in leadership positions, to exhibit professionalism by correcting such behaviors.

- **Cadets indicated some attitudes of disrespect might be related to the selective nature of the Academy.**

- *"I think it's worse here because I think cadets feel like they're above a step above others. I think there are a lot of cadets who have been told they're privileged and they're better, you know, than the enlisted soldiers and everything like that." (Female)*
- **Cadets indicated some attitudes of disrespect result from the "tough" image.**
- *"It's hard because a lot of the things come with the culture of the Academy and the Army in general. Coming into the Army you automatically feel like you have*

*to be that strong person, you have to be willing to accept criticism, willing to accept discrimination, because it happens no matter where you are. And it's hard to find a line between criticism and discrimination. And a lot of the things that we were seeing during basic training and here in general, the stereotypes that the males have, it will be extremely difficult to get rid of them. And just like before with race and now equal rights for marriage and things like that, those stereotypes, I think they have to take time and people proving them wrong.”*

(Female)

- “*I think especially towards women, that's the kind of culture at West Point. I think it's the culture of disrespect. Like everyone here knows the terms – I feel when women first came here it stuck and it just kind of got taught.*” (Male)
- “*I think it's how you grew up, too. I mean that was the big thing in high school; ‘Hey, look how tough I am, I can say these things and I don't get in trouble for it’ or something like that.*” (Male)
- Cadets indicated the competitive nature of the Academy fosters individualism rather than teamwork.
  - “*It's the whole separate but equal issue. You're separating us based on gender and physical ability but we're supposed to be considered equal as a whole but we're obviously not equal because we've been separated into these subgroups. I would like to see foreign militaries and their rates, with fully integrated militaries, there's no division between their gender, and compare to that because it's hard to say unless you can see those results.*” (Male)
  - “*I think there's something to be said about the reason behind the disparity between the Army and the Academy, that we're more individuals, we're not focused on a team objective. Even if you look at companies, I don't know if your survey sees, incident rates in companies where the company focuses more on being a family, being a team, the incident rate goes down. Or in my experience it's not the same. And then how the Academy can change to try to meet that objective would be our granting system is based a lot on rank and trying to push it towards skill sets. I think more of an approach towards skill set would be a better thing in the sense I shouldn't have to be competing against every single one of my classmates every day. I shouldn't feel if I help this guy out he's going to get a leg up over me, I think that's stupid.*” (Male)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist for USMA to encourage cadets to speak up when they have an issue with someone – it is the right thing to do to stop inappropriate behaviors from becoming the norm.

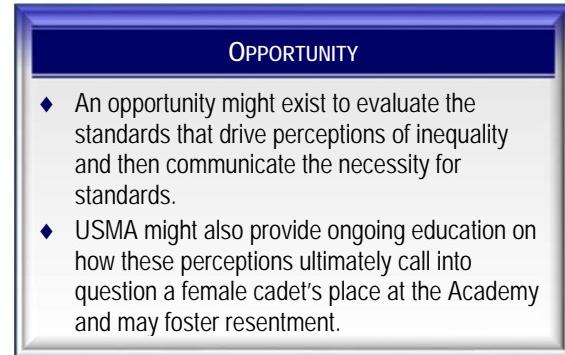
#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ Cadets may view their fellow cadets as competitors with subsequent resentment and ill will toward those who do better or appear to receive unfair advantage.
- ◆ An opportunity might exist to look at performance expectations at the Academy and consider the balance of individual and team achievements.

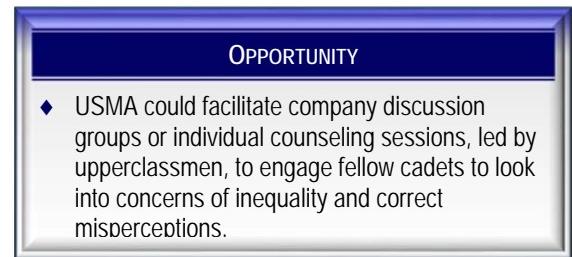
- Cadets did not think there has been any blatant disrespect since the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell.
  - “*People are overly cautious not to discriminate or show any sort of mal-intent towards anyone that's come out. I think they're extremely cautious about that. Because it's right along the lines of sexual assault. If you get up brought on some sort of harassment case like that I don't know if it's the end of your career but it's detrimental, so people are very cautious of respecting them.*” (Female)
  - “*I don't know if well-respected is the right term, but there are kids who have come out, they're not discriminating against them, they treat them the same as they were before they came out. They're the same person, so they don't change their behavior towards them at all. If you have people that are going to discriminate against gays, they would have done it before they came out too. It wouldn't be specific to that individual. It's just that that person would do it probably in the civilian world also, it's just who they are. But there's classmates who have come out and it's like they're very open with it and they just see it as the same as who they were before they came out too. There's no discrimination with them.*” (Female)
- Cadets indicated the ratio of men and women at the Academy has both a positive and negative effect on sexual harassment and sexist behavior.
  - “*I have friends at other academies that have higher percentage of women, especially the Coast Guard Academy, there's a little different culture. I don't know if there's a critical mass or not, but when you have a high percentage of women there seems to be a little bit of a difference in the culture.*” (Female)
  - “*I have a lot of friends at Air Force and Navy, and even though they have more women, they say that they feel like, because of the culture of the Academy itself, that they actually feel less safe there. They equate it more like a college campus. Whereas I think here, I feel like because we get the stuff beat into us all the time that we are more aware of it. Even though there are fewer women I actually feel a lot safer and feel like they're treated way better than the guys treat the women at the other academies. That's my experience and that's what a lot of my friends have told me. I could see the critical mass thing but based on what I've heard and seen from the other academies, I feel like the way that we do it here and the way we bring so much more awareness to it is more effective.*” (Female)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The military and the Academy are predominantly male-oriented.</li> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist to acknowledge that disrespect can be a function of perceived inequities in standards, societal attitudes, protecting one's ego, and immaturity and that knowing these effects can help mitigate their influence.</li> </ul>

- Cadets indicated perceived inequity in standards and selection for positions plays a role in negative attitudes toward women.
  - “*I felt it was greatest during Beast. Most of the profiles in my company were females. We don't know if that's naturally just their physique couldn't handle it, or it was because mentally they weren't tough enough and oftentimes we resented that. And a lot of times it ended up, even though we went through everything, sometimes they would end up with better or just as good grades as us and that really ticked a lot of us off. Are you kidding me, they only did a day of PT or so and yet, one, they got the better grade than me and, two, they don't have to redo Beast. That, personally, that was where I saw it and actually felt that anger towards them.*” (Male)
  - “*Also with boxing versus combative, they're essentially exempt from one of the most dreaded classes, at least to me. So I think it's one thing if they were compared against other boxers of comparable ability or something like that, but to completely exempt them from the course and give them what we all acknowledge to be an easier class, I think that's a pretty clear disparity.*” (Male)
  - “*I think it's sexist behavior that rewards women for the lack of difference in the standards [disparity stimulates the sexist comments]. They'd be like, 'Okay, you're pretty much just as good as I am because we take the same PT test, we're graded the same way, we do the same amount of running.' There wouldn't be a tendency to get fueled by anger for the fact that a girl can only do 42 push-ups or something or run 18 minutes and get the same amount of points on the PT test to run 16 minutes.*” (Male)
  - “*I'm surprised it's not a hundred [sexist behavior rate]. It's just how it is. Not all men here believe that women should be in the military, it's as simple as that. Or if we're not talking about that, maybe we're talking about women not having the same APFT [Army Physical Fitness Test] standards or women being in the infantry. And whether that has sparked a whole other discussion that can get pretty heated. So there are constantly these new things that come up. Like the APFT saying 'Oh, you guys should have to do the same thing as we do.' There's definitely some resentment there that we have quote, unquote easier standards than they do in some areas.*” (Female)
  - “*I have a friend who goes here, and he can kick my butt at anything, but I'm at a higher physical grade just because our standards are so different, and that eats him alive.*” (Female)



- “And I also know that for leadership positions, and I've had a lot of friends who have told me, this is actually true, that they try to get a critical mass of women in their positions and therefore they will choose a qualified woman over an equally qualified man for the position and that's created some tension. Because it's important for cadets to get the leadership jobs they want. So it could be something like that in terms of assignments.” (Female)
- “There's one new cadet, she's ridiculous. She's very, very physically fit. She got best new cadet or best female APFT this summer. But because she is so above and beyond the standard, she has a lot of respect from her peers.” (Male)
- **Cadets noted that sometimes it appears women are not held equally accountable as men.**
  - “This is anecdotal. I found that the women in my company are a lot less accountable when they don't do stuff. A lot of those women, and more so than men, simply just won't show up for trash duties or something. Granted, more women are athletes so they're not there for laundry, but even above and beyond that, I think they can get away with things without getting crap for it the same way a lot of guys would. In fact, I think just about any guy would get chewed out a lot more for skipping duties to the extent most women do honestly. I just think it's that most of the chain of command, which are mostly by definition men, because it's like 85 percent men here, and they feel uncomfortable chastising.” (Male)
- **As long as standards are maintained, cadets indicated there should be no impact from the change to the combat exclusion policy.**
  - “I think it would be necessary if they are going to be doing the same thing, then you would expect they would perform the same way.” (Male)
  - “I'd say that's accentuated by now women being allowed in the combat roles, people fear standards are being compromised so women can meet the ability to go infantry. Whereas a woman being able to do as many push-ups as a guy is completely different than being able to lift as much as a guy. I fear they compromise standards to meet the quota.” (Male)
  - “As far as I can tell, it's been business as usual since that. Nothing like the infrastructure or the logistical level has changed here. So I guess in turn nothing in attitude has really changed. I don't treat women with any more respect now than I did a few weeks ago or any less. Not that I treated them disrespectfully. They still can't branch infantry, they still don't use the men's bathroom, nothing here has changed since that.” (Male)



- “*If anything, this place to me proved, seeing some of the females perform here, that I definitely believe there are some women that could do those jobs. And I didn't have that mindset before I came here. But like he said, nothing since that law has changed, nothing has really changed. Yes, I agree with that completely [if a woman is qualified, she should have the job]. But I also believe that they shouldn't change standards or have a double standard at all, because I mean there's a reason why the standard is the standard for males, because you're trying to weed out other males too, right. So this is the standard for that job, regardless of what your sex is you should be able to do this, to perform this job. That's because this job is physically demanding. You need to be able to live up to those demands in order to perform and keep people around you safe and stuff like that. If you want true equality then you can't have a double standard.*” (Male)
  - “*So it's not like sexism it's just defending the integrity of the organization. By changing the standard you're not allowing more people in, you're denigrating the quality and integrity of the organization. As long as the standard is there, then as long as the person is meeting it.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that women in leadership positions can sometimes be harsh on other cadets.**
  - “*I feel like the females in the chain of command position have something to prove sometimes. They just have a bone to pick. I have to prove that I am as tough as so and so or as tough as the guys. Even if it's unfair to other people in that situation, it's just to show that to herself.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that negative attitudes toward women at the Academy are a minority position.**
  - “*There's overall acceptance. There are people who still don't think women should be here, but that's a very small minority.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that attitudes towards individual cadets can change over time.**
  - “*In ten years I think it's going to get better, but I don't think it will be gone. It's not one of those things you just get rid of.*” (Male)
  - “*I have [seen attitudes change]. And over Beast, a girl who is not here anymore, she left, she started out, she had a hard time physically, which seems to spark it a lot, fell out of a run, something like that. So her last name became an adjective. And guys initially in our platoon would stick up for her, 'Hey, she's trying, she's out there, she's working, team effort.' A couple would help her out, push her up the hill or whatever. And there would be one or two that would be she has blond hair, she needs to leave, she shouldn't be here. And as it started to progress it got worse and worse. And the chain of command didn't interject because a lot of chain of command were males that thought the same thing, weakest link shouldn't be there. It was cadet chain of command, not actually one of the officers. And*

*she eventually left because she couldn't take that kind of discrimination.”*  
(Female)

- **Cadets indicated there is not much more that can be done about sexual harassment and sexist behavior.**
  - “*Could there possibly be any more emphasis than there already is? It seems this is all we talk about. How many briefs have we been to? Short of having a daily announcement from the poop deck, I don't think it could possibly be hammered into us anymore.*” (Male)
  - “*Personally I feel like because West Point beats it into our heads so much and have all of these trainings, it makes it a bigger deal than it really is. But that's coming from me who has never had bad experiences, so I'd say I'm probably more biased about it.*” (Female)

### **Cadet Recommendations**

- **Discuss gender-related issues, such as the relationship of sexual harassment and sexist behavior on USC, to help increase awareness.**
  - “*I think sessions like this are good, because it was brought up at the beginning, we have so much that we are just forced to go to. You've got a thousand other things you've got to do, but it doesn't matter, you're going to the brief, you're automatically going to the brief with a negative attitude, and you just sit and you listen to somebody lecture and you're just, ‘Will you just let me get out of here?’ But with stuff like this it opens it up, small groups, you're able to talk and hear what other people are thinking, and it makes you actually think about the topic more than just sitting there and letting the words of the briefer wash over you. This is a good way to do it.*” (Male)
  - “*And one of the things from CASHA, that's one of the things they argue a lot for and discuss. If you go to briefing, you don't care, you fall asleep. People just don't show up. There are a thousand people, there's no intimate relationship and it's just dudes talking. That's one reason why they're trying to do briefings by class and company. First of all, you're more likely to talk because you're in a smaller group. I feel in a small group you feel a little bit more pressure to say something because they can look at you, but also you listen a little bit more because you're not in a such a big crowd. That's one thing about the training, especially an issue like sexual harassment and assault. If it's a huge group, it's not going to work that well.*” (Male)
  - “*Sometimes with the data you just see the numbers. You'll think about it and it will make sense, but it's easy to forget. Just like memorizing dates and stuff for history. But it's when you have events, when you have a friend talk to you, I'm sure that would have an effect on you. If someone knows somebody who was*

*sexually assaulted or harassed, usually their views are a lot different because they have that story in their mind.” (Male)*

- **Engage leaders in affecting a change in culture.**
  - *“I think you're going to need to have the upper chain of command, even in the cadet chain of command or officers, they need to set the example. Because I know sometimes the chain of command isn't taken seriously, but you still look up to a squad leader or a platoon leader. If they set the tone, that's not going to happen from the beginning, I think people are going to be much more hesitant to express sexist behavior or anything like that. I know especially during the summer training we had a squad leader who was always joking around and saying crude jokes. And we had a girl on our squad, and he was kind of like, ‘Oh, you don't mind, do you?’ If he had set in stone that we are not doing that, it probably wouldn't have happened. I think you just really need somebody to set the tone to begin with, that that's not going to happen.” (Male)*

### ***Reporting***

The purpose of this section was to gain additional understanding of why, even with all of the emphasis on USC and zero tolerance, cadets are still reluctant to report their experiences. Cadets offered a number of potential reasons, especially the perceived repercussions from reporting. The section ended with cadets providing recommendations to remove barriers to reporting.

#### ***Reasons for Not Reporting Unwanted Sexual Contact***

- **Cadets do not want to get the offender in trouble.**
  - *“I think it has something to do with the fact that I read once that a lot of sexual violence takes place either within a relationship or among friends. So in that context a person may be looking out for their friend, they might think yes, we had that drunken night where he forced himself on me but I don't want to ruin his life because of it. And it really would ruin your career if you got convicted of sexual assault in the Army. So I think some of that might come out of safeguarding the boyfriend.” (Male)*
  - *“I think it's a good thing that there's such severe consequences for unwanted sexual contact, but I feel like that deters girls from turning the guy in because she doesn't want to be the reason that he's not in the Academy anymore.” (Female)*

#### **OPPORTUNITY**

- ♦ Loyalty to ones' fellow cadets is understandable, but USC is a crime.
- ♦ An opportunity might exist to remind cadets that by not speaking up, the offender may perpetrate crimes against fellow cadets.

- **Cadets do not want to show weakness.**
  - “*I think it's just the attitude of West Point and the Army. Most of these incidents probably have some sort of alcohol involved or some sort of situation that's less than ideal. So you as the victim might have to admit the fact that you were doing something that shows weakness in yourself. So you don't want to go to a chain of command and show weakness, even though you know you should. You don't want to portray yourself as weak and having a flaw in your thinking or something like that.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated there are too many repercussions from reporting, such as lack of support from friends and peers, victim blaming, reliving the incident during the investigation, impact on academics, over-reaction, social isolation, and punishment for one's own actions.**
  - “*I think there's a big fear to come out, though, because if you say someone did something, first of all, most people are victim blamers, like 'No, she regretted it' or 'No, it wasn't right.' For a guy I feel most guys would never come out even if it was blatant. And then if you lose the case, then not only does everyone know your business, everyone knows what happened. People would rather just deal with that pain than have everyone know about it. Because you don't want to be judged a lot of times. Especially here for women. There's such a big thing about reputation, such a big thing not only how guys think about you but how other girls think about you.*” (Male)
  - “*Possibly peer pressure. How you are going to get viewed afterward? Whether you turn the person in and you stay here, they get kicked out, and then everybody looks at you in a different way, the other way around. I wouldn't say it was peer pressure don't turn him in, more of how are people going to look at me if I turn this person in and then they get kicked out and then down the road next year there would be a stigma.*” (Male)
  - “*It's a long process. And I also think it's just a small community, when things like this come out, even if it's restricted, somehow they still come out. So the victim may feel like they don't want other people to know about it, so they're unwilling to report it.*” (Female)
  - “*There is an emphasis placed on the victim's situation, what the victim was doing, how could the victim have prevented this from happening? And I know there's other violations occurring, under-aged drinking or fraternization or things like*

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist to mitigate repercussions from reporting USC by focusing on victim care, providing evidence that reporting may stop offenders from further crimes, and may help victims from being re-victimized.</li> <li>◆ Additional staff members authorized to take restricted reports could help cadets feel more comfortable coming forward to discuss incidents and initiate corrective actions.</li> </ul>

*that that they would rather not drag themselves into and they push it aside and try to get out of their minds and hope that it doesn't happen again. Just not wanting collateral damage I guess. And also there's a lot of stigma of women who report people who just say that they're crying rape or something like that." (Female)*

- *"It's an uncomfortable process. I've had a friend who's gone through it. She had to call her male TAC, who she's going to see every day for the next whatever. And then you have to go to the hospital where they have another uncomfortable process. And you talk to eight people all over again and you have to relive all of those things." (Female)*
- **Cadets indicated they can and should "take care of it myself."**
  - *"There are such serious consequences for this, I would be more inclined to just go rip this person up and down a wall for like 20 minutes, and then after try getting him in trouble. A lot of the girls who go here are independent, I feel like everyone would just rather try to take care of it themselves before going up through a serious chain of command line filing and stuff." (Female)*
  - *"There's a big guy mentality to handle it yourself. So if they see us trying to report and get people in trouble, they're like 'Oh, you should have just stayed away from him, and now he's gone.'" (Female)*
  - *"Coerced that person. Like saying I'm going to turn you in. Or threaten the person. They could say 'You assaulted me, I could turn you in.' They took care of it. Forced someone into doing something for them." (Male)*
  - *"I think a lot of times, at least for the sexual harassment, if you take care of it yourself it's a non-issue in the future and I don't think it necessarily needs to be reported. There's a certain line, but for sexual harassment I think nine times out of ten you can take care of it yourself or within the company." (Female)*
  - *"So for the girls it would almost be easier for them too [to take care of it themselves], because they go through the wringer if they report something. Just the time to do a thorough investigation, their lives are affected, the guy's life is affected. If you can handle it in a way other than reporting it, then that falls in the line of the West Point mission of being a leader and a problem solver and all of that stuff, if you can fix it yourself, fix it." (Male)*
  - *"If something like that happened to me and I wanted to take care of it myself, I'd find the biggest friend that I had and be like 'Look, somebody is harassing me, whatever, can you talk to them and tell him to stop.' And I'm pretty sure that would help. I'd probably prefer that over sending it up officially because then you get labeled as the one who ended somebody's career." (Female)*

- For some cadets “take care of it myself” might mean internalizing the situation and taking no action.

— “*Plus the severity of the offense.*

*Maybe not the actual severity of the offense but after the fact selling it short, like ‘Oh, it wasn’t that bad,’ even if it wasn’t complete sexual intercourse, you could still say it wasn’t that bad, it wasn’t that violent. Afterwards trying to tone it down in your mind, why you might not report it because was it really that bad, even if it was obviously very reportable. Or managing your emotional response and say you are dealing with it.”* (Male)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist for leadership to encourage mental fitness as an important factor in being successful in the Academy and Army – a cultural change that seeking help for stress is not different than seeking help with a physical problem.

— “*I think you do kind of a cost benefit analysis of should I report this or shouldn’t I? When you think about what could I do versus what could the system do or the administration do, I think people might think I can handle this on my own. This person is going to have the same kind of benefits or the same cost of this investigation if I just tell them ‘Hey, I don’t want you doing this, please stop.’ And rather than deal with the headache of the paperwork, the meetings, whatever it’s going to take to have this thing go all the way through, this person will stop if I just tell them to and I’ll just tell them to stop. That’s not going to change the date or the event the unwanted sexual contact happened, but I think for the most part people feel more comfortable either handling it by themselves or just classifying it in their minds as something that’s not worth reporting, this really wasn’t that big a deal, this person was drunk, I was drunk, it was a misunderstanding, I’m just going to let this go. Not to say that that’s right. I think it’s less about not wanting to report it because I’m going to be ostracized, but this is going to take up a lot of time and a lot of effort and it would just be easier or I would get the same or almost the same benefits just handling it myself.”* (Male)

- Cadets indicated there is too much “red tape” associated with reporting.

— “*I’d say one reason it’s a huge hassle. On top of what we already have to do, you have to go out of your way to talk to someone about it and then there’s legal implications and different stuff you have to do there. And it’s just more to do.”* (Male)

— “*There’s such a process of dealing with it, why would I want to get involved with this long process of having this person convicted as a sexual assault. It takes time away from your own daily tasks.”* (Male)

- Cadets indicated that protecting one's reputation is important.
  - “*People just don't want to have their name marked because something that stays with you here. So I think people just don't want their name, even when they were the victim they don't want their name tarnished because people talk.*” (Female)
  - “*You care about your reputation, you don't want to be that girl, that guy who got somebody in trouble and you stirred the pot. You don't want to make yourself look like a victim because that could make you look weak or something. It's a lot about perception. Everybody talks, the rumor mill is huge here and in the Army your reputation is going to stay with us when we leave here. I would say that's a big part of it.*” (Female)
- Cadets noted that reporting USC becomes more complex when alcohol or fraternization are involved.
  - “*Especially when it's alcohol related, if you're a plebe or a yuk and something happens, you might not want to report it because you were drinking and you were doing things that you weren't supposed to be doing that could get you in trouble as well. So I could see where somebody might not report in that case.*” (Male)
  - “*That's definitely part of it. Because the consequences are so severe here if you frat or if you drink alcohol underage or you're doing something stupid under the influence of alcohol, those consequences would definitely cause me if I was in that situation to do some serious thinking about whether or not it was worth getting in all that trouble to see that person.*” (Female)
  - “*I think part of that is the statistic you said, that 65 percent of it is alcohol related. So then you question, if someone said I got hit by a car because I was playing chicken with the car, I'm not going to have any sympathy for you. So there's that stigma that if it's alcohol related, then it's like you were playing chicken with a car.*” (Male)
  - “*We had an incident happen where a plebe inappropriately had a relationship with a yearling, and she wanted to call it off, and he continued to pressure her and tell her that he would get her in trouble with her chain of command. And she finally ended up going to her TAC officer and reporting it. But it ended up in these huge consequences for both of them because there was a precedent of frat. But there was still that sexual assault, harassment undertone there. And I think that in and of itself, the rank thing and the amount of trouble you can get in for fraternizing discourages people from reporting. And it took a lot for her to finally come*

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to minimize the fears of getting in trouble for alcohol use or fraternization by focusing on the behaviors the Academy considers most serious – if the goal is to reduce USC, then other related offenses should be handled in context.

*forward. She had been harassed for months, then she finally stepped up.”*  
(Female)

- **Cadets might be reluctant to report unwanted behaviors less severe than completed sex.**
  - “*I'm not sure if this is unique to the Military Academy but I feel like more people would report completed just because if it's just unwanted contact, they might not think ‘Oh, if I report this, what if it's not really what I think it is or didn't really go that far, I'll just look stupid if I reported it or something like that.’ And then in those cases they don't report it then it would obviously just progress. That would be my take on it.”* (Female)
  - “*I feel like the most likely reports would be the ones in the middle for the same reason that you are saying, just touching and stuff, they don't want to seem like a snitch or whatever, overreacting to something small. But then again I feel like there are so many emotional consequences that come with completed assault that goes into a whole other realm of not wanting to disclose it and all this stuff. So I think attempted but going farther than touching would be the most likely reported.”* (Female)
- **Cadets might be less inclined to report a same-gender offender.**
  - “*I think male-on-male would be less likely to report it because of stigmas. And there was already a case this past year where people were judging about ‘Oh, he's just tickling, it's not sexual harassment.’ And there's a lot of stigma behind that. I think male-on-male, I feel like they would rarely report it.”* (Female)
  - “*I think with males in general, no. First of all, if a man admits that a woman assaulted him, most people are like ‘What's wrong with you, that's what everyone wants’ [Laughter.] But if you're a man who's been assaulted by a man, you don't want people [to know]. Especially in the military. In our culture we're supposed to be tougher – we're supposed to be in the Army, there are things that go along with that masculinity. We're competitive; we're all for the most part trying to be the best we can be. That's a big thing to say I've been assaulted by a man – or been assaulted anyway. It's hard enough for us to admit we suck at basketball, let alone...’* (Male)
  - “*Do you remember in the last SHARP brief that we had, the guy said that some high ranking officer was asked, if you were sexually assaulted by some other person [of the same gender] would he admit it, and he's like ‘No way.’ That's just a part of our culture.”* (Male)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ♦ An opportunity might exist to remind cadets that unreported offenses involving touching or attempted sex may lead to additional attempts with the same or different victims.

- Cadets indicated attitudes are changing, but there is a perception among some cadets that if USC is reported, nothing will be done.
  - “*That's an issue for not just here but the military in general. The reason women don't come up and tell people about it is because they know – the bigger percentage that there's nothing going to be done. You probably all know in the news, it's been huge in the media these days that movie, I forgot what the movie is called [The Invisible War.] After that movie came out it's really sparked, it's all in the news. But there's more of a chance there's nothing going to be done and those people who assaulted the MOS or other officers are getting promoted and they're still in the Army. And that's just the big scale. At West Point I think that things like frat and things just like being a buddy quote, unquote, is preventing the girls to come up and say anything at all. I know it's all progress right now, it's just going the right way, but we're still far behind of actually getting things done and the reason why.*” (Female)

### **Cadet Recommendations**

- Continue to allow restricted reporting.
  - “*It's a good idea because if that happens, especially if you need medical attention immediately, and you're not ready to talk about it, I feel like that's a good idea. So somebody can get the medical attention they need after something happens, and then they can decide later. The restricted reporting just so they can get it out there and they don't have to hold it in. Maybe it will help their confidence as well too. Maybe if they get the story out they'll see that from talking to somebody about it.*” (Female)
  - “*I think it's a good idea. If someone is not comfortable reporting, restricted is probably a good way to start. I would imagine at some point somebody would prompt them to move to unrestricted quite honestly, especially in this environment.*” (Female)
- Encourage reporting to remove offenders from the Corps.
  - “*You are asking what the leadership can do to mitigate sexual harassment. I really don't think they can do anything, to be honest. I think it's the character of cadets. I think people just need to be encouraged somehow that it's okay to report and that those kids can get kicked out I think is the only way to clean out the Corps.*” (Female)

- **Provide more information about anonymous reporting, especially for freshmen.**
  - “*Maybe if there was a system to report that was maybe anonymous. Face-to-face confrontation is hard, that's the hardest part. Especially when you are brand new, you're scared and you have no idea what's going on or even if that's the right behavior.*” (Female)
  - “*It is helpful because knowing that you can go in without it going up your chain of command. Cadets, we're perfectionists, we also have the type A personality, almost everyone does coming into here, and we're all very worried about commissioning and branching and our grades. That fear really is what sets us apart from going unrestricted. I think if more of us knew about the restricted line – more reports would be restricted and it would be different.*” (Female)
  - “*I feel like a lot of our classmates know there is a difference and know the general gist of it, but I don't think anyone really remembers the details or how you would even go about filing a report or who you would even talk to. I feel like everyone knows that it can be done but I would have no idea who to go to or where to go to.*” (Female)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ There might be two opportunities here: to continually remind cadets of the reporting options and to whom they can make the different types of report, and to increase the number of people who can receive a restricted report.</li> <li>◆ It appears that the information is given on the types of reporting early in training, but cadets might be somewhat overwhelmed at that point. Going over the reporting options in smaller groups after the large-session trainings would give each cadet an opportunity to ask for clarification and to correct misunderstandings.</li> </ul>

- **Share facts to emphasize the importance of reporting.**

- “*Maybe just sharing stories. If you come forward you can save other women from going through the same thing. One thing they do if there's an honor violation, they'll always announce it at lunch and they'll tell you the dishonor. You don't know anything else about it. It keeps it in your mind.*” (Male)
- “*People may want to be anonymous but I feel like if the Corps knew more, knew that it was present, just because they know it's a big deal. In the back of my mind, nobody actually gets sexually assaulted. But even if it's anonymous in their report to the Academy, it's probably going to be easily circulated to where, when, who.*” (Male)
- “*It's like the XYZ case. They'll say cadet X did this and cheated off of cadet Y. They could do something similar for sexual assault cases. If that's awfully specific then that person may feel their story is being publicized that they may feel offended by that. 'I don't want the entire Corps to know.' Or even to identify their own behaviors. 'Oh, wow, I probably shouldn't do that,' they may be interpreting that as sexual harassment or even sexual assault. I didn't interpret*

*what I was doing, like tapping your butt casually, as sexual assault. But now that I'm aware that it's a problem in the Corps, perhaps I will be less likely to commit the offense.” (Male)*

- *“I feel like reporting it as a restrictive report almost lets people speculate more about the person. If they just came out and explained what happened, I think the victim would get maybe a more fair shake of what actually happened. Automatically you are that person who sent that person to jail and that people just start going that person is a horrible person, ‘How could they have done that?’ If they could stand up and be like ‘This is what happened to me,’ people might be like ‘Wow, okay.’ That’s just the way I am looking at it because I know a couple of people who this has happened to and I don’t know the story but I sure know what people think of them and they don’t know the story either. It’s not really fair. So in that nature I think a restrictive report can almost hinder the victim.”*  
(Female)

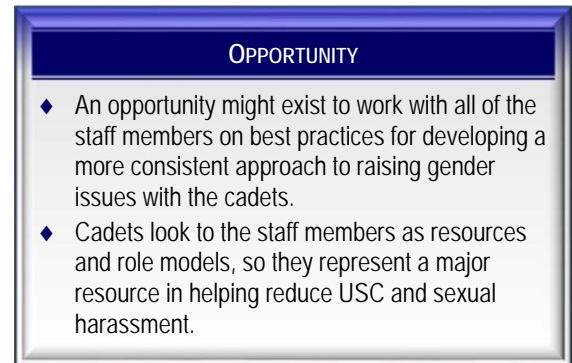
### ***Perceptions of Leadership***

Another major area for investigation in the 2013 SAGR focus groups centered on perceptions of leadership with respect to leaders being engaged in preventing USC. The presumption is that programmatic aspects of sexual assault prevention and response are in place but require continual emphasis. Leadership involvement is necessary at all levels to make programs maximally effective. Cadets were asked about the degree to which they interact with leadership on gender-related issues, whether leaders react appropriately and lead by example, and what else leaders can do to help diminish USC.

### ***Interactions with Leadership on Gender-Related Topics***

- Cadets indicated senior leaders are clear that they are serious about stopping sexual assault.
  - *“The Commandant and the Superintendent and everybody, when we have the SHARP briefs or everything like that, it’s really clear that they’re really focused on stopping it.”* (Female)
  - *“We know they’re serious.”* (Male)
  - *“They were notorious at addressing as a class last year, and the Commandant said his number one priority was protecting the Corps against ourselves, against outsiders, against something else. He emphasized sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sex in the barracks as a whole, like consensual sex was his number one priority.”* (Male)
  - *“They do the big briefs. We don’t actually have a lot of contact with them, a lot of it’s highlighted in the presentation to us about no tolerance for it. We want everybody to be safe.”* (Female)

- “A lot of them have an open door policy. Even if they don't specifically say harassment or assault, if they just say I have an open door policy, if you have any problems, feel free to come directly to me and talk about it, I think that's good thing, they're available. Letting them know they're open to talk to obviously instead of making it all bureaucratic, showing that they care.” (Female)
- Cadets indicated senior leaders are sincere about addressing sexual assault, but their approach could be better.
  - “I think last year they tried to implement a lot of new prevention techniques, but they did it so fast they didn't think about the implications of what they were doing. It was very targeted at the females only. I know for me it brought a lot of resentment. I got pulled into a brief that was only girls, didn't address the guys. But I think they've learned from that, they were trying to quickly change things. It was kind of a stumble at first.” (Female)
  - “It was more of an attempt to physically prevent anything from happening as opposed to actually getting to the root of the problem, which is the culture and things that are harder to track. Instead they tried to take the easy way out and say all the girls are going to sleep together if they are alone for the weekend. But I think that the senior leadership has a good intent, they do a good job of addressing their opinions and how strongly they feel about it but there's not a whole lot they can really do to get the smaller levels, like the companies and the social level. Like I said, it's a cultural problem. And just by them voicing their thoughts of sexual assault and harassment they're not going to actively change or prevent anything from happening I guess.” (Female)
- Cadets indicated that many of the TACs, TAC NCOs, faculty, and coaches discuss gender issues with them, but to varying degrees.
  - “And you always hear the bad stories in the media of the leaders who turn the blind eye and ignore the situation, but I feel that's the outlier and I would trust any commander that I had to handle the situation appropriately. And not just the military community, but even coaches here or cadet commanders, anything like that, I would trust them to take it seriously.” (Female)
  - “My TAC is really big on it. He talks to us. When there is even a report in our regiment about it, he'll bring us all to the back and be really strict. He's pretty strict on the locker room talk, do you see there's a locker room around here and there's not. He's pretty good about it.” (Female)



- “On a weekly basis on every Friday or if it's a three-day weekend on every Thursday at lunch formation there will be a safety brief. In that safety brief the TAC or the safety officer will say we have zero tolerance for sexual assault, sexual harassment.” (Male)
  - “I know I don't really get anything from my company. Mostly it's just like all the briefings that we have to go to. I assume that has something to do with the higher ups, the Superintendent and the Commandant probably scheduled those and make sure that happened.” (Female)
  - “My coach, she supports the SHARP program here. So she was ‘If you need to talk to me, come talk to me.’ She was very strict on what we said and what people said around us and stuff like that.” (Female)
  - “I have an instructor, not necessarily that there's been an instance in class, but she'll come back from a SHARP brief and she'll just like sit there and talk with us and give us instances in the Army that she's experienced, just to push the point across that this is important and it does affect the cohesion of an Army unit.” (Female)
  - “It doesn't really come up.” (Male)
  - “There is very little tolerance for it. I've had multiple teachers say if you are going to harm one of my soldiers, I don't want you in my unit. There's a big non-tolerance for it. A lot of teachers in class will ask what's going on in the Corps. So a lot of times when you find out what your teachers opinions are, they will tell personal experiences about when they've been in the military, how they've handled that situation. So there's definitely been talk among them, between the professors and faculty to the cadets.” (Female)
- Cadets indicated some leaders address gender-related issues but their sincerity is questioned.
  - “I feel it's become a mandatory part of whenever they come speak. Whatever they're talking about, it doesn't matter, at the end, and sexual assault is bad. And it almost loses its genuiness when they have to include it every single time they have to talk to us.” (Male)
  - “As you just said, they're trying to hound this, put a bunch of money into it and all that. And so I think it's just passed down to the Superintendent and the Commandant, saying you have to talk to the Corps of Cadets about this, and then they just throw it in there.” (Male)
- Cadets indicated that the new CASHA program has potential for making cadets more comfortable seeking help from leaders.
  - “I think as far as reporting goes, I can't see a girl going to the TAC officer and telling him, something if it's a man, that's a little nerve wracking. And I think they

*just implemented this new thing this year where they have a CASHA rep, Cadets Against Sexual Assault and Harassment. They picked one male and one female and they make it known, I haven't heard it a lot lately. Maybe they just need to get it out there more, that you can go to them and report anything and they'll take it up for you. So that way you don't have the hesitancy to take it to your TAC.”* (Female)

### **Leading by Example**

- **Cadets indicated leadership sets a good example.**
  - “*I think nine times out of ten they are [good role models]. We have officers here who are under review just like they would be in the regular Army, and you have cases like that. But I think usually they're pretty good examples.*” (Female)
  - “*Definitely zero tolerance in our company. Both our TAC and our TAC NCO have taken on the role of father figures to be honest, and they're pretty threatening. So it's nice to have a dad around me.*” (Female)
  - “*I also think most of our TAC officers here have dealt with the Army in some way in their units, they've all been company commanders. I think they do understand how delicately to treat it and how to go about it.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated hearing about gender-related issues directly from Academy leadership would be helpful.**
  - “*I think something like that would be really helpful [being told about an incident by company officers] because sometimes I feel like all this SHARP stuff is being pushed down from big Army but not necessarily – like the people here don't really believe in it.*” (Male)
- **Some cadets, particularly freshman, are not sure how to raise concerns about inappropriate behaviors by leaders.**
  - “*During my summer training we had an NCO on our platoon that was completely inappropriate with all the girls. And there's nothing we can do about it as cadets because we're just little cadets and who are we going to complain to. When you're out in the field for an extended period of time and this person is making crude jokes or whatever it is. At least in my eyes it's like they have earned their way through the Army, and who am I to...?*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated leadership encourages them to seek help.**
  - “*CPD is our cadet version of psychological clinic here, it's a Cadet Center for Personal Development, and not many cadets know about it at all. We have CEP too, Center of Enhanced Performance, that's academic stuff. And it's a very underused tool. I don't think that cadets really know how to use them either. And one of my teachers was a company commander in Afghanistan and one of the*

*stories she told us is that she made a big deal about not making psychological problems a big deal. She said in the middle of formation someone walked up to her in front of everyone and like ‘Ma’am, I have a meeting with the psychologist for PTSD, I’ll be missing formation today.’ This is in front of everyone. And I said ‘Wow, what did you do?’ She said it wasn’t a big deal. It wasn’t a big deal to at all. So if we focus on the leadership, from maybe senior leadership making it not a big deal to report, making it not a big frenzy for someone to come up and ask for help, then it would change things because you wouldn’t feel that sense of like ‘Oh, I’m doing something really big right now, this is really hard for me.’ Instead it would just be I need to report this. It becomes as easy as I need to report someone stealing and this was a problem and it offended me sort of thing.”* (Female)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ Seeking help with stress is viewed as a weakness by many cadets, but support expressed by faculty may tone down the sentiment against seeking help.
- ◆ An opportunity might exist to remind the staff that what they say about these types of issues has an impact – developing common messages would be helpful so cadets hear the same thing from different sources on a recurring basis.

- Cadets indicated leadership would handle gender-related cases properly.
  - “It also depends on how strict your TAC is. They’re definitely going to get a talking to [about inappropriate behaviors], and I’m pretty sure he’s going to make sure that it doesn’t happen again, at least the cadet knows that for sexual harassment or something like that.” (Female)
  - “I think that they do have a zero tolerance policy. I think people do get pretty harshly punished if it is an actual severe case and not just someone trying to cover up whatever they did.” (Female)
- Cadets felt leadership would not have difficulty with same-sex cases.
  - “I think they would treat it equally for the most part. I’ve had a lot of officers telling stories about it happening in their units before, so a lot of them have experiences with it and they do see it as something that’s equally serious.” (Female)
- Cadets indicated leadership could send strong signals against USC by reacting decisively.
  - “I feel like there has to be a set punishment where people know what’s going to happen when sexual assault happens. And I feel like the TAC should implement that strongly when it happens, especially for someone in their own company. And the best thing that a leader could do is really make sure that punishment is, I don’t know what the word for it, but make sure that the punishment is harsh enough to

*give someone a wake-up call this is what's going to happen if you do this.”*  
(Female)

- **Cadets noted that most interactions with leadership, if any, are during the duty day.**
  - “*They're only here from eight a.m. until four p.m. They all have wives and kids or husbands and kids. So I guess they're here while we're in class. And there's no time to really do anything while you're in class.*” (Male)
- **Cadet indicated that behaviors might improve if leadership lessened restrictions on them.**
  - “*I honestly think that treating us more like adults and professionals than as cadets, that would help. The fact that we're restricted to here is not really treating me as a professional and future officer. It's just more or less unnecessary discipline. The fact that I have to go eat in the mess hall and eat exactly what they are telling me to eat and not be able to choose for myself is not treating me as a professional adult. There is [a purpose to develop a cohesive force] but I think also that was developed when the Corps was all men. And now there are these things that might be outdated with the current effort how we're trying to transform the Army, West Point is probably lagging behind.*” (Male)
  - “*I was thinking that just the fact that we have so little freedom here. We can't leave after our last class is over, we can't go home as it were. But in the actual Army you can leave, you have that freedom. And I think that just the fact that we're in close proximity to women and that they're stuck here and we're stuck here, I think that increases these rates a lot. And out in the actual Army, you can get away, you can blow off some steam doing something outside of the Army.*” (Male)

### ***Training***

Training in sexual assault prevention and response is a recurring topic for surveys and focus groups. The facilitator started by asking cadets to describe the training they receive on these topics, how they perceive their training in reducing USC, and to give examples of the most effective training they have experienced. The section on training concluded with a discussion of recommendations for improvement.

#### ***Training Received***

- **Cadets noted that much of the sexual assault prevention and response training is conducted in large groups, which leads to varying levels of interest.**
  - “*There was a SHARP brief that was Corps-wide, we had the entire Corps there. The guy was a good speaker, it was an interesting brief, but for the entire Corps being there you are going to fall asleep, you're going to not take it very seriously. If that kind of training is administered at the company level and they say this is*

*serious, it happens and it can't continue to happen, then I think it would be more effective.” (Male)*

- “*I think it was a suicide stand-down day. They had I think pretty much the entire post in one of the auditoriums for I think it was about three and a half or four hours. There were some slides and there were some specialists from up at Keller, there were master resilience trainers. That was, I think I would go as far as to say it was highly ineffective training and became a butt of a lot jokes as well. Not an awful presentation, but definitely an awful one to give to 7,000 people at once. It was very hard to be like ‘Yeah, this is definitely worth my time.’” (Male)*
- **Many cadets do not take sexual assault prevention and response training seriously.**
  - “*I remember during basic, we went to so many SHARP briefs, a lot. One after another. So by the end of however many we had, it became a joke, another SHARP brief. If we have just one or two really good ones. Then you have to strike that balance between having enough of them but not having so many that people just don't take them seriously anymore because it's like ‘Oh, another one.’” (Female)*
  - “*I think any time you attach training to anything like this, it goes in one ear, out the other, or there's some kind of reaction, people are not paying attention or they'll be cynical. If somebody was trying to pay attention they probably wouldn't get anything out of it.” (Male)*
  - “*It's a big time waste. Even if the information was good, do you really need to spend four hours of my precious time? It's an important issue. I agree that it should be done but I think that practical implication, it would receive bad feedback.” (Male)*
- **Cadets indicated basic training could be more helpful in addressing improper gender-related behaviors.**
  - “*During our basic training they have all of this information they have to get out to us. They sandwich it all together in nine hours of briefings sitting in a chair watching the officer check the box, brief them on this, brief them on that. And I can assure you that when our cadet chain of command came into basic training, they knew all about hydration, they knew what color, they knew how many quarts, they probably got pounded on briefs about this. If they would have the same education on what to look for in terms of sexist behavior and sex discrimination, it might have been different. So focused on hydration, so focused on this, that we*

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to evaluate the best method for imparting messages about gender issues by establishing a cadet working group through CASHA to review trainings and presentations beforehand and offer suggestions on the best ways to hold cadets' attention.

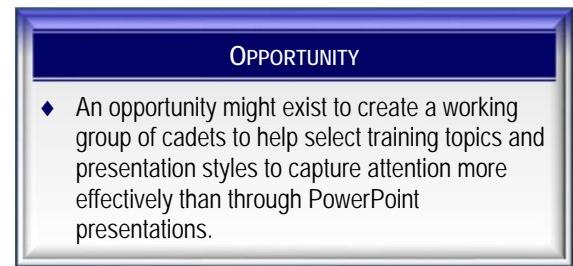
*overlook some other important thing to look for. They may not have noticed certain undercurrents that were happening.”* (Female)

- **Cadets indicated training has helped increase general awareness of gender-related issues.**
  - “*What they're trying to do with CASHA, it's not going to solve the problem, it's not going to completely get rid of it, but I think it will deter some people from doing those kinds of things, and at least if something does happen, it will allow help to be able to get there faster. In most companies there's no one really thinking of that stuff. You see two people going into a room, you don't even register it. But just from the training it makes me think a second time.*” (Male)
  - “*As far as explaining things, letting us know, reminding us a lot of times sometimes of where things are located, what the definitions are, I think they're effective and they just get people thinking and refocused. If you haven't thought about it in a while or if you are dealing with it or if you were thinking about doing something stupid for some reason, it's a reminder, which is good.*” (Female)
  - “*I think the culmination of all the briefs over the years has made everyone the subject matter expert, even if they don't want to learn it, eventually becomes ingrained in them.*” (Female)
- **Cadets noted there is variety in the types of sexual assault prevention and response training they receive.**
  - “*They brought an improv group, I think it was last semester. It was funny and it was still informative but it changed it up so we weren't just watching a PowerPoint and getting told by a person ‘Don't do this, do this stuff.’*” (Female)
  - “*I remember watching a video, I don't remember what it was called. It had officers, NCOs, and MSCs and stuff like that. It was a really long video, it dragged out, but it's one of the things I actually remember. Instead of just sitting there at a brief and staring at an officer as he goes on and on about some topic, so [that was memorable at least].*” (Male)
  - “*The ones that people talk to us personally, instead of ‘Okay, we have a bunch of slides we are going to go through why you don't assault people.’*” (Female)
  - “*It was doctor – I forgot his name – but he came in with a presentation and I think that was one of the best presentations we had because it was a lot of fact based. And because it's a majority of the guys feel like they're being told that they are putting the women at risk and I think this guy presented it in a way that I think even the guys walked away and said ‘Okay.’ And he addressed all areas, male-on-male, female-on-female, and female-to-male, male-to-female and gave a lot of statistics. So I think that he's matter of fact in the way he presented it I think hit our class the most. He's the best one we've had out of most of them.*” (Female)

- **The best sexual assault prevention and response training relates to life as a cadet.**
  - “*Mass dissemination of information is hard. And I know that because it's trying to get all of this stuff out at once to everyone. You also lose that sense of sensitivity to the topic. When we talk about dehydration, we had a cadet die last year from dehydration in the field and that struck home obviously for everyone. ‘Okay, that's a big deal.’ This doesn't strike home to everyone the same way that that did. We haven't had an incident reported of rape here in a while, and at Air Force maybe they view it differently because of that fact.*” (Female)
  - “*I think it's really effective training for people to come in and speak about their personal stories, as hard as it is for them.*” (Female)

### **Cadet Recommendations**

- **Make the sexual assault prevention and response training more relevant by using varied formats and presenters.**
  - “*I think the videos grab more attention than someone just sitting up there talking. Maybe not on a PowerPoint or on a PowerPoint it could be, but I think the videos grab the attention a little more than someone talking.*” (Male)
  - “*Real-world cases where somebody was sexually assaulted sets it. And you can put a face to it, it really hits home in that fashion. More than someone teaching you not to sexually assault people. ‘Yeah, obviously, got it, cool.’*” (Male)
  - “*I know we had that briefing with the woman who had been sexually assaulted, and I thought that was a real powerful kick in the gut, like ‘Yes, it happens.’ But there's nothing like that here at the Academy, we have never had a grad come back and talk. I don't know to bridge that gap so that people make the connection, so she's not making it up or there's something going on there, don't put all the blame on her.*” (Female)
  - “*Because you're hearing from a person who's actually been sexually assaulted, then you realize this really actually could happen.*” (Female)
  - “*Also I think it's important to have a woman up there, but we even had a guy up there, he's a Captain, and he explained he had a female lieutenant who was assaulted. I think it would be good to have a guy up there so the guys can relate more with this guy. That would be a good idea.*” (Female)



- “It’s formal session versus informal session. Formal meaning SHARP training. I don’t know how effective they are, it’s mandatory training that nobody wants to be there. But if a TAC uses his own experiences in the Army, I think that’s more effective and they tend to talk about teamwork a lot more at that point.” (Male)
  - “They have actually brought in somebody before. I’ve been to one of those briefings. It depends actually on the person if it actually hits home with them. And I was touched by the story, just to know that it happened. It was on post too. So just being that close and knowing that this stuff can happen. But that they did something about it, and there was a restraining order, that person is out of the Army. Knowing that stuff happens in real life and there are measures that could be taken hits home and lets you know that you will be taken care of.” (Female)
- **Additional emphasis on response would be helpful.**
  - “I feel like maybe they should go through more steps about what you should do in the event that you experience anything like that so you’re not unaware of what you can do. People should be more confident with that and how they feel and what’s okay for them – what they feel is okay for them to like receive from other people and that – because the people were too scared, they don’t know what to do. I feel like that would help plebes because if they don’t know who they can talk to in a company.” (Female)
- **Post gender-related information on the Corps of Cadets web site.**
  - “If this information was very obviously posted on one of the web sites that cadets usually going to, like CIF or USCC, it’s probably on there somewhere, but the web site is so big and so hard to navigate that no one probably knows where to get it. But if it was obviously posted on one of the web sites I think that information would get out better. Or there are even certain things that we have to do – it will be sent down from your command and you have to print it out and post it on the back of your door or something like that.” (Female)
- **Share more information about conviction rates to increase awareness.**
  - “We hear these numbers and that doesn’t mean anything to us. ‘Oh, there were twelve unrestricted reports.’ Okay, what does that mean, how severe were they? You don’t know. So it’s just a number on a page and not that I need to know who that was, but I have no idea what the circumstances were.” (Female)
  - “If you lie, you know what’s going to happen, you’re going to get an honor board, you’re going to get humiliated, you’re most likely going to get kicked out. If you’re going to do something with alcohol, you know what’s going to happen to you, you’re going to walk a million hours, you’re likely to get kicked out. I think if anything, make it more known what could happen to you if you get in trouble for sexual assault.” (Female)

- “*I just feel like we never hear anything. We generally just don't know how anything is handled here. We don't know how the guy gets punished. We really are in the dark.*” (Female)
- **Provide more personalized training by engaging cadets in small group discussions.**
  - “*I feel like the small group discussions would take place during briefs. We don't have specific SHARP briefs but it sometimes comes up in PME, professional military ethics that we have, especially when General Petraeus came, that scandal came to life. We had a PME right after that talked about sexual assault and relations in the military.*” (Male)
  - “*And I think one advantage of doing it on the company level is it brings the responsibility, or the perception of the responsibility, down to the company level. We're all responsible for it. But if the briefing is a brigade level briefing then we're only looking for brigade staff to uphold the standard. If you bring it down to the company, then it's in company.*” (Male)
  - “*Maybe they could even go with those groups discussing the process and just not a scenario of where something like that happens. Go through the process that you would have to go through to bring it up so people also know that too, so they know who they can go to talk to. Get people engaged.*” (Female)
- **Provide information about resources on signs, cards, or the Corps of Cadets home page so it is accessible when needed.**
  - “*So if it was on the back of your door or if it was sent down some way like that would be more effective. Or even during Beast if they have a little card that sums it up and makes it an inspectable item, as much as I hate inspectable items. I know it's hard to get this information out to so many people but I don't think briefings were very effective. It might have been effective for an hour after the brief but no one remembers or retains that information.*” (Female)
  - “[Having the SARC info on a piece of paper on the back of the dorm room doors] Yes, that's a useful place. Other places, like the Corps of Cadets home page.” (Male)
- **Have someone who has been convicted for sexual assault talk to the cadets.**
  - “*That would be memorable.*” (Male)
  - “*That would be a shock.*” (Male)
  - “*In my company, we had someone who had had a DUI. We had a driver safety training, no one cares. And he was like, 'I got a DUI, and this is what happened.' And then we're more engaged. He's someone we see here. This is someone who*

*actually went through it, had the still marching hours like right now. So it's like having someone who's a part of it.”* (Male)

### **Additional Cadet Recommendations**

The final major area of discussion in the 2013 SAGR focus groups was titled “Additional recommendations for addressing USC and sexual harassment.” The purpose was to spend a few minutes reflecting on the general discussion of factors influencing USC at the Academy and to drive out any other good ideas from the cadets on ways to reduce it. To start the conversation, cadets were asked how well prepared they felt for dealing with gender-related issues when they have subordinates. The facilitator also asked if a Dignity and Respect Code, similar to the Honor Code, might be helpful in creating a culture of zero tolerance. The facilitator ended the focus groups by asking cadets for their final thoughts on issues and if there were any questions that were not asked but should have been.

### **Preparation for the Future**

- **Some cadets felt prepared for dealing with gender-related issues in the future.**
  - *“Go to your JAG right away. Whenever there's an issue like that, I've been instructed, to make sure everything is done according just go talk to the JAG representative.”* (Male)
  - *“I think we're really cynical about the whole we're not getting prepared but when I talk to some graduates they tell me that it's different. Once you graduate you realize how much you really were prepared. So it's hard to tell for every single person, but I guess we'll only know once we graduate.”* (Male)
  - *“As long as I know the name of the person to send them to, and I'll find out when I get there, no problem.”* (Female)
  - *“I think there are different assignments here that will prepare you for that better. I was a counselor during the summer training program, so I feel pretty confident that I would know what to do. But, if someone was just made a squad leader, I don't know if they would know off the top of their head exactly where to start that process. So that might be something that could be incorporated right into an Military Science class or an Military Experience class.”* (Male)
  - *“The Army provides a lot of ways of what to do if it happens, who to go to, who to talk to, and I think over the four years they've really beat that into our heads. But I think we'll learn more as we experience more.”* (Female)

### **Dignity and Respect Code**

- **Cadets indicated another code of conduct is unnecessary.**
  - *“No. People would laugh at it and make fun of it, like the Buckner SHARP training, it just turned into a huge joke.”* (Male)

- “*I think that should be inherent in everyone and you shouldn't have to have a code.*” (Male)
- “*I feel like dignity and respect is a whole higher level than it needs to be a code, that's a whole part of being a good human being. Instead of you can't do this, it shouldn't even be a code, it should not be rules, it should be instilled in you as a human being.*” (Female)
- “*That's overkill. We have a code, we have a respect creed right now, but it's not a code that you get put up on like an honor code.*” (Female)
- “*We already have the seven Army values, and respect is one of them. So I think it would almost become a joke if we created something that we said was just as valuable as the honor code. The honor code has been in place for forever, right, you can't just create one.*” (Male)



## **Chapter 3: U.S. Military Academy Faculty and Staff**

Two faculty and staff focus group sessions were conducted at USMA from March 25-29, 2013. Each session was scheduled for a 90-minute period. There was one session for faculty members with nine participants and one session for Officer Representative/Officer in Charge (OR/OIC) with thirteen participants.<sup>3</sup>

### ***Sexual Assault***

The 2013 SAGR focus groups were the first time sessions were held with anyone other than cadets. Because faculty and staff interact with cadets daily, the rationale was to present to them many of the same questions posed to the cadet participants to gain a different perspective on issues. The same approach was taken where in each topical area the facilitator made an effort to drive out causes for behaviors or situations being discussed and recommendations for improvement.

The discussions began by sharing with the participants the unwanted sexual contact (USC) rates from the 2012 SAGR and asking whether they had seen those results. Participants were asked to discuss why the rates have increased across the past four survey years. Additional questions were posed for their knowledge of where incidents were most likely to occur, their thoughts on victims experiencing multiple incidents of USC over time, and the role of “sexting” and pornography. Participants further contributed comments on the role alcohol plays in USC, when during the day it is more likely to occur, and whether “victim blaming” occurs.

### ***Familiarity with Incidence Rates from 2012 SAGR***

- **Faculty and staff did not think the USC rates were shocking.**
  - *“If you’re looking for a reaction to the number, I’m not shocked, it’s not a shocking number to me. But the more I sit and think about ten percent of the people every year are getting assaulted in some sort of way. The more I sit and think about that, wow, that’s bad, but I just wasn’t shocked. I didn’t look and say ‘Oh, my God, I can’t believe that.’”* (OR/OIC)
- **Faculty and staff felt cadets might be more comfortable acknowledging USC now than in the past.**
  - *“Affirmative responses are probably going up. I don’t know that the actual incident rate is changing as much as people are now starting to feel more comfortable.”* (Faculty)
  - *“I would think with a longer period of track record it would be entirely plausible to say that it is just awareness. Those who have been offended against are now more aware that this kind of touch counts as sexual – unwanted sexual contact.*

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<sup>3</sup> At USMA the athletic department coaches and staff are primarily contractor personnel and not within the authority of DMDC to include in the study. Therefore several Officer Representatives to sports teams were included in the OR/OIC focus group session.

*So when the survey comes around because of that increased awareness I'm more inclined to mark that which might not have been marked two years ago. Even though the surveys are anonymous, I assume there's some discomfort confronting what happened to you in the past and acknowledging it on a survey. And as time goes on and more awareness is raised, it's now more comfortable to admit.”*

(Faculty)

- “*One of the things, the flip side of this, when we talk about awareness, is we're not connecting the dots with telling people that they shouldn't be doing these things. And so that seems to be when we look at education awareness, when we look at the data it appears that maybe we're at some sort of steady state, we appear to be missing the point of trying to drive home, be it men or any sort of aggressor, we're not distancing advising that behavior or telling them that really ‘No means no,’ that shouldn't happen. We seem to have a steady state, there might be more awareness but we're not driving anything home with an aggressor population that is not correct.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I think that the education brings to light some of the behaviors that you didn't think were inappropriate. I can think back to last year, one of the SHARP classes, they brought actors in and they witnessed some scenarios. And I remember sitting in the middle of the cadets; the ripple of comments. They were like ‘Wow, I didn't realize that would be considered sexual harassment.’ That just seemed like a normal reaction or attitude toward one another. And then when you actually peel back they're ‘Oh, yeah, that really is.’ So I think part of that is the education, that we're teaching them and saying this isn't appropriate behavior. So I can understand why you might see a spike. And then I feel it should come down.*” (OR/OIC)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that societal attitudes might contribute to the mindset of some men at the Academy.**
    - “*That planning is something of serial rapists that isolate the victim, picking the weaker one, picking the one who's most drunk, isolating from a group of other friends, getting them drunk to a particular point. You see that in fraternities, the colleges see that quite a bit. I don't think that would be unusual here.*” (Faculty)
    - “*I think that gets to the idea of alcohol and behaviors and targeting people. I think that would be very in line with outside the Academy type behaviors too. You know, ‘She's a drinker, she's a partier, I've got to link up with you.’”* (OR/OIC)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ♦ An opportunity might exist to emphasize the idea that the Academy is not the typical college or fraternity house; cadets are expected to uphold higher standards and those who do not will stand out against a backdrop of professional, respectful behavior.

## **Location of Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- Faculty and staff indicated that dorms, classrooms, and locker rooms are possible locations of USC.
  - “*It's where they spend their unsupervised time [dormitories].*” (Faculty)
  - “*My first reaction would say the barracks. That's where you are more on a one on one basis, rather than in class or in the mess hall or something like that.*” (OR/OIC)
- Faculty and staff indicated areas around the post could present opportunities for USC.
  - “*I would add to the areas, is that cadets are more active longer into the days. So for them it's like 'Hey, I'll just go for a run at ten o'clock at night. I'm allowed to do that and I will go.' Many of the roads are dark. But it's not uncommon in a normal university to see a panic phone somewhere, every corner, every couple of blocks. It would not surprise me if I walked outside my door and saw two cadets of opposite sex running and there's no panic phone if something did happen. And there's other trails from neighborhoods out 'Oh, we'll go down this trail, we'll go for a run.'* Are there abilities to communicate an issue there?
  - Lighting also can be sparse in some areas. But I don't want to burn any more energy, so that's a big thing too.” (OR/OIC)
  - “*I've heard rumors about parking lots also, the big parking lots where cadets can park. So they might be able to park their car and walk around wherever they want.*” (OR/OIC)
  - “*When you talk about summer training, you've got the standard Corps training. And when out at Buckner – it gets to an environment where you asked where does it happen on the post – there's dark areas. And I could see, no one has told me, an event where I've got my Buckner squad mate, something develops, it continues, there's plenty of areas to walk around, we're not on duty, let's get out of the bay, it's open bay, and it starts off as something mutual and then, 'Hey, this is not for me,' or 'I don't like you or whatever.'* Buckner is other another one of those areas, poorly lit, no panic phones. You're walking everywhere, you're just out there flapping in the wind. And I could see that occurring. No one has ever told me that, but as I've read cases and things like that.” (OR/OIC)

OPPORTUNITY
♦ While faculty and staff did not know of any specific incidents, an opportunity might exist to increase safety in the darker, more remote areas of campus.

- Faculty and staff had mixed opinions about Academy-sponsored trips being opportunities for USC to occur.
  - “They definitely let their guard down on club trips. To them it feels more like spring break or they’re on vacation, they aren’t on military duty. I’ve seen them do not so much sexual stuff but I’m seen them take down the military bearing in the vans. The faculty is like in the front seat. So you can always hear it from the back of the vans.” (OR/OIC)
  - “But it may not be the vans. I’ve taken a lot of trips where I’m the only officer on the trip and I’ve got 40, 50 cadets. So I can only be in one place at one time, so it’s hard to keep up with them.” (OR/OIC)
  - “I was surprised when you said that most of them [incidents] happen here. But I guess on a, not per capita but on a rate basis, I would think that it would happen more often per time that people spend away from the Academy. Obviously they spend most of their time here, but I’ll bet that the rate at which things happen on some of these trips per time, is probably much higher than here.” (OR/OIC)
  - “I know in our department a cadet is given an AID and no one chaperones them, and he or she may go by themselves or may go with two or three other cadets, depending on the program. I know some departments will send someone down to check, not to check on them but to help the learning process. ‘Okay, what have you learned over two, three weeks, you’ve got two more, let’s make that time a valuable experience.’ But other than that there’s not time nor funding to send someone 24/7 with them. To your point on athletic events, I think the NCAA teams, they’re all male or all female, and they’re run pretty hard. There’s not a lot of break in there. I have not done a club squad team, but I’ve also done a club trip where we go fast and then they’re released, they’re fifth floor hotel, third floor hotel, all over the place.” (OR/OIC)
- Off campus locations are most likely local trips, not Academy-sponsored trips.
  - “And when they are walking back from having drinks in town. I don’t know where on that path, after they go and have a couple of drinks.” (OR/OIC)
- USC is less likely to occur during summer because cadets are extremely busy.
  - “Because summer training you get a lot of feedback. I know on their papers and stuff they’re run ragged, they’re so tired. I don’t think that is the setting where the

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ Though faculty and staff did not know of any specific incidents on trips, an opportunity might exist to take precautions to increase safety by designating a cadet “trip commander” or other position to make cadets responsible for each other and give them leadership credit, thus increasing the incentive to take issues and responsibility seriously.

*predominance of these are happening. I think it's predominantly happening during the school year.” (OR/OIC)*

- **Following the policy of room sharing on weekends could help prevent USC.**
  - “*The buddy system, they are supposed to not allow female cadets to be alone in rooms on weekends because the number of extracurricular activities we have, and especially there's a lot of gender based clubs and so an awful high percentage of the women cadets are gone on the weekend and it leaves a lot of folks by themselves in the barracks and they're supposed to double up. And I've talked to some who says that doesn't happen, it's too much trouble and we just don't do it. That sets up a victim.*” (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff doubted the effectiveness of the Charge of Quarters (CQ) surveillance.**
  - “*He's just one of your peers, so he's not any different from the guy sitting across the hall.*” (Faculty)
  - “*One time I walked around and they weren't looking, they were sitting there doing their homework, weren't really focused that much.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I've just been thinking about some of the questions you've asked, what's changed over time. And I've been on the faculty here a while.*  
*The barracks have really changed. The discipline in the barracks, the condition of the barracks, what's allowable in the barracks. Officer presence in the barracks has gone down quite a bit. The CQ, they may have reinstated a CQ in place policy but for a long time the CQ didn't exist. They have guards, they have guards on the weekend and they have a few assigned checks they have to make, but they're not taking advantage of the people that they have on guard duty and keeping them busy enough, moving and checking things. And that could be taken advantage of. If the officers themselves are not going to be there, the TAC officers are not going to be there. But I really do think command presence in the barracks would make a big presence. Command presence makes a difference wherever cadets are, because cadets don't like to self-discipline, and they're getting worse and worse about that. And someone has to be the adult. And I think I'd like to see the Academy emphasize that more.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I think in civilian institutions there are RAs, residential advisors or Griffins, and their funding for school or for tuition is tied to their duties as being an RA or being a Griffin and keeping watch over things and keeping order. And here you have CGR and OC. A lot of the upperclass, though, they're gone on pass on the weekend, so the leadership is out for the most part. So you have the kids that*

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to evaluate current surveillance practices in the dorms, possibly increasing staff visibility during non-duty hours and adding specific routes for the CQ.

*maybe aren't acting so right and they're tied down to the upperclass, they've been tied down to West Point. And then you have people on CCQ or OC who are apathetic and not really being as active going around. If we could put in more checks and balances as far as 'Hey, if you're on CCQ or if you're in CGR, you're on duty, you have to go around this many times, these are the places you need to check.' Not just once or twice but have a roving [routine]. There is a lot of ground to cover. It's a lot of floors, it's a lot of barracks, it's a lot of space to cover." (OR/OIC)*

### **Multiple Incidents of Unwanted Sexual Contact**

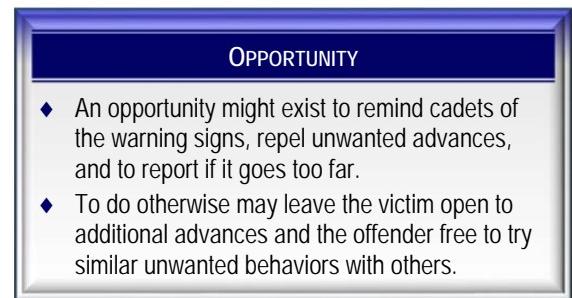
- **Faculty and staff opinions differed on whether multiple incidents involved the same offender or different offenders.**
  - *"I'm hesitant to the idea we have sexual perpetrators. So often times you hear sexual assault, unwanted touching, whatever that might be, it's always somebody you know. I'm hesitant, unless you have data validating that somebody is going to sexually assault through completion with somebody else and then that becomes a flag and I want to do it with somebody else and now I can do it over and over again, as opposed to more likely I know this person, this person I have flirted with, now we both had alcohol and it's not like I'm looking at a sexual predation but now we end up in a situation where somebody either doesn't communicate 'No means no' versus someone who is not able to fully receive that. I don't know if you have data that validates that. You often hear that most sexual assaults occur with people who know each other." (Faculty)*
  - *"I'm skeptical that automatically means a predator, someone that is stalking and devising a plan. It's just an opportunist who said if I got stopped once I would have recognized this wasn't a good opportunity, since I wasn't stopped I see opportunity all kinds of places." (Faculty)*
  - *"But you ask if that kind of behavior could happen here, the serial perpetrator. Yes, it can happen. I've known about cadets who continued that up until when they were officers and continued it while they were officers." (Faculty)*
  - *"Probably with different victims. And on a bigger note it sends a message to everybody that they got away with it and it sends messages to the female that why should I report it, why should I go through a court case, it doesn't matter." (OR/OIC)*
- **Faculty and staff felt offenders might repeat their actions if they perceive there is no penalty for getting caught.**
  - *"People have become numb. We're facing the same thing with the honor code right now. The cadets joke around, it's a legalization of the honor code, so it's no longer the spirit of the honor code, it's what I can get away with. So this is the same thing. So 'Hey, he didn't get in trouble for that, maybe it's really not wrong,*

*even though they're saying it.' So it's what the system says. And I agree that the Academy takes it very seriously. But, when we say the system, the DoD system says it's wrong, but then how they punish it appropriately. In some cases it's no different than a kid. If you tell them it's wrong and you don't punish them, they're not going to see it as wrong."* (OR/OIC)

- *"I think for the summer field I have mentored, when they have been in those situations where it was progression or it actually happened, a lot of times they won't say anything because they don't want to be ostracized for coming out and saying it. It's not so much the guys, it's the other girls, that they were well, 'You're a ho or you're this or you're that or you did this or you were drinking and you were doing all these wrong things so you put yourself in that situation.' Or if it was one of the progression type situations, 'Well, why didn't you stop it back then?' And sometimes it comes out 'Well, it didn't seem that it was that big of a deal and it was just like, okay, seriously, you're not leaving me alone.'"* (OR/OIC)
- Faculty and staff indicated an individual's assertiveness plays a role in experiencing multiple offenses.
  - *"I think someone who is more aggressive or more assertive to say no and mean it in that kind of tone is probably not the person who it's happening to multiple times. It's probably someone who's meek or doesn't say it clearly or thinks they're saying no vibes but isn't doing it as clearly as they maybe should."* (Faculty)
  - *"I'd be surprised if there wasn't a little bit of appeasement going on as well. If I stand my ground here then I'm going to be made fun of and ridiculed and rejected from the group. If I give a little bit, I bet it will stop there, so I'm going to put up with just a little bit and hope it stops there or hope that I can stand my ground in a way that people won't blame me for standing my ground but here, if I did it at this point, I would be rejected."* (Faculty)

### **Victim Blaming**

- Faculty and staff indicated that victim blaming does occur.
  - *"Actually we just talked about it today in our classes. We go through a scenario where a soldier reported rape or sexual assault through a roommate and what the command should do along those lines. I don't think it's unusual for the Academy; it's the same thing with regard to suicide in the big Army. Sexual assault prosecutions and dealing with cases have always been a lot of questions of the*



*victim. In fact, even in our conversation here has always been what the victim could do. What the truth is, people who are rapists have reported, there's a history of all the cases we see, have been unwanted touching to unwanted solicitation before they get to the rape itself. And very, very few sexual assault cases come from somebody jumping out a dark alley.”* (Faculty)

- “*I'd say yes [victim blaming occurs]. Or she was promiscuous, she was with this person. The same thing as in the civilian sector.*” (OR/OIC)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ Although faculty and staff did not have much to say about victim blaming, the topic is so vital that an opportunity might exist to continue to remind cadets that the behavior of a victim is not the focus of the crime; to create a culture where everyone is on board with stopping USC, victim blaming must be minimized.

### **Use of Alcohol**

- Faculty and staff indicated that alcohol is typically involved in cases of USC.
  - “*I hear a lot of these are associated with alcohol. And so I don't know, creating environments of not a tea toting type atmosphere but an atmosphere of responsible drinking and something along those lines. It's hard to deal with. As per the regimental TAC brief at the beginning of the year, they basically said no hard liquor at the Firstie Club and basically disinclining any sort of binge drinker, now they have just beer. I know that's a change they made.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I only recall in the past several years them tightening up. I remember a couple of times where some big thing happened amongst the Corps and they banned all alcoholic beverages for a certain period of time. So it seems like they're trying to promote a more responsible atmosphere when alcohol is involved. Years ago, we didn't have sexual assault classes I don't think, but you never merged into classes; that needs to be happening. I'm sure it is in some way, maybe the PME classes.*” (Faculty)

### **Faculty and Staff Recommendations**

- Have someone who has been convicted for sexual assault talk to the cadets.
  - “*What if you had some convicted felons come in? Someone convicted of some of these offenses come in, that would be a very powerful way of connecting to cadets. I'm suggesting they bring in someone in Leavenworth, somebody convicted of this. I think from a cadet perspective you always get the victim's side, but to have someone come in and say ‘Look, I was in your shoes and this is what I did, I was a predator.’ I think that would be a very powerful narrative to sell the cadets.*” (Faculty)

- “Then you bring in that guy once he's convicted to talk to the cadets. I think that's a powerful tool. If you are trying to connect with cadets, which is hard to do after lunch, bringing someone like that in is a way to sear it into their minds.” (Faculty)
  - “Just one thought that might have some prospect. The earlier suggestion was made bringing in somebody who was an offender and was convicted. Similarly bringing in somebody who maybe was an offender and not only said look what happened to me but if you could find somebody who can come in and say thank goodness that somebody stopped the kind of egregious behavior I was engaging in, not because I might have escalated to murder or something worse, but because there is something inherently wrong with my character that I did that kind of thing. And I am grateful, I wasn't for the first ten years after I was reported, but I eventually became grateful that somebody called me on a behavior.” (Faculty)
  - “That's probably the best idea I've heard from this meeting because in my experience, I've had two situations like that when I was younger. I remember a guy getting up in an orange suit, it was for alcohol, drinking and driving, two of his buddies died. They videotaped it, they showed some of that. Another one, less dramatic, when I was at division, the captain fell asleep at a wheel because he was drunk at a traffic light, cop caught him, he got slammed. He had to give a class on alcohol, drinking and driving to a unit of his peers and superiors, amongst the officers, no PD.” (Faculty)
- **Help cadets understand and avoid risky situations by talking to them about the use of alcohol, willingness to speak up when something unwanted begins, reliance on one's “buddies,” etc.**
  - “I also think it has to do with you put yourself in a position where not only you may be physically or mentally vulnerable because you've got alcohol involved, but because you've put yourself in a position where this other person realizes that we're away from West Point, we are drinking, we are underage, and so then it's like we've thrown the rules out. And so, if we've broken these other rules, breaking some social norms doesn't seem so bad, right. And it almost provides some justification in that person's mind. And then it provides for you, maybe it's harder for you now to say no or to certainly then report it later because you're in this vulnerable spot that you put yourself into. And if you could provide that kind of context, people might avoid those situations.” (OR/OIC)
  - “I think it would be incredibly powerful in a smaller setting, a small classroom setting, not a theater, but to say here is an example of behavior across all sectors of society, people who have stood up for themselves and done something and it

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to raise awareness by hearing from people who have experienced situations themselves, or had to deal with them as a leader.

*has led to success, they were still successful. It also brings in the people that were surrounded in that situation and said ‘I really looked up to,’ this person after they did that and I realized what I was doing was wrong, and I’m not punished for it, I learned a lesson, I moved on. But so much of it is this is how the nuclear bomb is going to go off in your face so just don’t mess with nuclear bombs, when in fact people do operate on nuclear bombs and they live and it’s okay.” (OR/OIC)*

- “We talk about the buddy system, so I think that’s something they probably highlight as well. That’s something we continue to drive home, that’s important.” (Faculty)*
- “I was thinking back to a video we were shown in Iraq. It was about a police officer who talks about getting raped by a male. What you saw was someone who survived this event, explained how he felt, how his peers felt. Peers come on and say, I doubted him, but in the end I am here trying to make you better. So we’re showing them it’s okay, you can stand up for yourself, you can do these things. And it correlates with their role modeling behavior, which they’re very high on when they rate themselves as I like to learn leadership by seeing someone do something and copying it. I don’t want to read about your book, I don’t want to watch your movie. I want to find what right looks like and I want to be that. I want the instant gratification generation type now stuff.” (OR/OIC)*
- “I think from talking to cadets when we do our case study, and we also talk about a couple other ones – we talk about the Paterno incident at Penn State. How does this happen, like really, does the Army think we do these things? And I say ‘Well, statistics say that some people do do them.’ And the cadets have a pretty interesting insight to it, because we talk about that, how does this happen, how do we let organizations get this far? And one cadet, and a lot of cadets agreed with him, he said ‘Sir, 95 percent of us would never do this.’ But the perpetrator in and of itself, there’s two things that are going on. Either they’re a very hardened, callous person who’s evil, or they just don’t know that what they were doing was wrong. ‘I just reached around, I thought the signal was there.’ And so I think they know what rape is, very clearly. I think there is a grey area that they almost, rationalize, ‘Well, what can I get away with, it can’t be wrong, I don’t want to ask, I’m embarrassed, you know, I’m a virgin, this can’t be bad.’ The shallow end of the pool that’s really safest in fact can be dangerous to some people, and you need to be aware of those things. I thought that was an interesting insight from the cadets because they came up with it and I had never thought of it that way. We always envision this crazy, psychotic person is how it’s painted, but in fact it’s not.” (OR/OIC)*

### ***Sexual Harassment and Sexist Behavior***

Similar to the cadet focus groups, this set of questions posed a hypothesis about the relationship of verbally offensive behaviors, such as sexual harassment and sexist comments, on USC. The facilitator began by sharing results from the 2012 SAGR on rates of sexual harassment

and sexist behavior at the Academy over the past four surveys and hearing participants' reactions. The facilitator then gave additional findings based on 2012 SAGR that those men and women who experienced USC in the past year also tended to experience sexual harassment and sexist behavior at higher rates. Participants commented on the possible relationships among these unwanted gender-related behaviors and what the impact might be of addressing the verbal behaviors and possibly reducing USC. Following up, the facilitator asked if cultural factors, such as attitudes of disrespect toward women, contributed to USC. This section ended with a discussion of recommendations for decreasing sexual harassment and sexist behavior.

### **Familiarity with Incidence Rates from 2012 SAGR**

- **Faculty members did not indicate observing blatant sexist behavior or disregard for women, but there is work to be done.**
  - *"I'm not a hundred percent sure, I haven't seen anything that's anti-woman, but I don't think we're all the way to fully on board with women as being fully included into the Army structure." (Faculty)*
  - *"The only thing I've heard is as I was talking to a cadet that I'm his advisor and OR for his team – he was telling me how it's improved, that there used to be a group of men who would say the women aren't as good athletes, they shouldn't get to go to nationals. That's not there anymore. This is the best the team's ever been. I don't know if that's a culture shift, but it was an improvement in the physical fitness sense that was gone." (Faculty)*
- **Faculty and staff indicated that sexist behavior is partly an issue of equity in standards.**
  - *"I wouldn't be surprised if a huge proportion of that 91 percent of sexist behavior had something to do with physical fitness. When I was a young lieutenant just coming into the military, that was a big deal too. I mean guys get used to it, as you go up in rank you realize that there are a lot of physical differences and all that. But I hear that among the cadets, there's so much competition, so the APFT scale being different, and 'Oh, the women have it so easy.'" (OR/OIC)*

#### **OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist for faculty and staff to be proponents for the Academy's policies regarding gender inequalities and where necessary, highlight misconceptions of preferential treatment.

### **Relationship to Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- **Faculty and staff did not find it surprising that those cadets who experienced USC also experienced sexual harassment.**

- “*I haven't seen anything but it's not a stretch to believe that there's probably some unwanted sexual attention before unwanted sexual contact. I believe that would probably be occurring.*” (Faculty)
- “*If one out of every ten women is getting unwanted sexual contact, it's not a stretch that half are getting cat calls or whatever.*” (Faculty)
- “*I would say definitely yes, I think there is definitely a link, just from that progression. It's like levels of force powered in a negative way. If I start with this, 'Oh, they're not stopping me, nobody is stopping me from saying this, well, I'll try this next time.' The next thing you know, it leads to rape or whatever else it leads to.*” (OR/OIC)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that there are several ways to look at the relationship of sexual harassment and USC.**
  - “*Please don't think I think we should demonize this 10.7 percent of women [who experienced unwanted sexual contact] and you don't want to paint that stereotype. But are there certain behaviors that one may do that presents them as either this is the things that I put up with, I'm not okay with it, vulnerability you talked about. Are there factors, be it emotional or social, that they seem to evince. Are they placing themselves in danger, are they putting themselves in situations that may be found to be dangerous later on down the road. Nobody deserves to have that happen to them, but are they okay with going out with older cadets and drinking and putting themselves in a situation that others who may choose on Thursday nights to study may not have the same situations.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I think too that it's possible that women who have had unwanted sexual contact are more sensitive to sexual harassment after that because of that incident. So we don't have a time sense of whether these things that they remember are now after when they've been traumatized to some degree. But you are still asking them after the contact, which may have made them more sensitive to the things going around of that nature.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I think it's a slippery slope to a certain extent. And that's something we've talked about in class, there's a lot of opportunities – we might hear an offhand comment before class or during it, we address it immediately, talk about it, it's a learning experience in the class. So I think there are opportunities in the classroom to impact the cadets in that way.*” (Faculty)

### ***Roles and Responsibilities***

In this section of questions, participants were asked how they perceived their roles with respect to preventing and responding to USC. They were asked to describe the interactions they have with students on these issues, their interactions with the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) staff, and recommendations for helping them better deal with issues.

## **Perceived Roles**

- Faculty members believed they take their roles with respect to preventing and responding to USC seriously.
  - “*I think we take it seriously.*” (Faculty)
- Faculty and staff indicated that there is a difference between being overly controlling and leading by example.
  - “*The command presence in the form of looking over your shoulder I think is probably not a desirable thing and our increased emphasis should be on trying to find a way to get the cadets to self-govern rather than trying to control them.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I think as instructors, you have to make clear and model the standard and then don't accept anything else. You yourself can't make sexist jokes or sexist comments and then expect that the cadets will then not do it. And so just embodies that standard going forward. And then what makes that difficult is the example I had. Prior to class the other day I walked into class, I try to be very aware of having a classroom that's not loud.*” (Faculty)

### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to coordinate a strategy session to decide on the highest priority messages for all staff members to give and the best methods for doing so.

- Faculty and staff indicated relationships between cadets and staff vary.
  - “*That happens. Get into informal discussions in the classroom and you do get a chance to emphasize what proper behavior is like. I think that happens in most classrooms, you'll hit upon that topic at some time during a year.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I think that's difficult. I think the best role, as purely instructor, I'm not speaking for TACs, is knowing students and if you see something that doesn't seem right, it's how you communicate that to the TACs and creating a classroom environment that makes you available, either through ice breakers or informal discussions. I am available to have these conversations with you. But if I have to incorporate [discussions of gender issues] into my already condensed class, classes that have nothing to do with my subject, I think it's going to be the thousand yard stare until it's time that topic starts up again and now I can start taking notes and give the 500 yard stare.*” (Faculty)

### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to engage faculty and staff more fully through planning and training, especially if there is a common message everyone is broadcasting, so that everyone has the skills to offer advice and guidance.

- “*I think it's more effective if you are speaking from the heart, if something moves on you to talk to those guys. Maybe you overheard some pre-class conversation that was going on and you have a frame of reference because it was something that happened to you when you were a lieutenant or a cadet or a captain. That happens occasionally. I think that's what you are referring to. When we have these opportunities you take them. But they don't come around every semester. A lot of times you are in your zone and just kick off teaching right away and go.*” (Faculty)
  - “*Faculty have an awful lot of contact with students and develop a lot of personal relationships and in that role I've seen many cases of the faculty member becoming the priest receiving confession. I've heard many things come out from those discussions, especially sexual assault. But you are in a personal relationship but also in a mentor role and they probably haven't gotten there with the TAC yet because they don't have the contact time with the TAC as they do the faculty.*” (Faculty)
- **Faculty stated that some courses more naturally address topics such as USC.**
  - “*In my class, it's a natural thing for us to include [USC] and it has been dictated that we do, what I thought was really across the curriculum wide effort. So we have a couple of classes where it naturally fits in. And it's just showing how the issue that we're talking about right now has implications for, among other things, sexual assault. And see how the Commandant's requirement that you teach people with respect, and sexual assault is a violation of that. Similarly when we talk war and off limits tactics, it's easy to talk about how rape is a tool of war that is sometimes used and is off limits and why. I can see that that doesn't go quite as easily in a physics lecture.*” (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff members speak up when they observe an inappropriate behavior.**
  - “*I'm sure stuff happens that I don't necessarily hear. I've seen emails where I've had to engage cadets, like they may be sending out something about a PT test coming up, and they'll have a picture of a girl with a bikini and they send that to the whole company. Like ‘Okay, let's address this and why this is not appropriate.’ So I think we handle those opportunities where we can step in. At least from my units I'm going to address it and show them why this is not right. But I'm sure it happens more when I'm not around.*” (OR/OIC)
  - “*There's a distinct difference for me at least as an instructor. The classroom is purely professional. I never hear anything in the classroom. That's my area and they know when they walk in the door they're going to follow my lead. But then if I go down to the teams' locker rooms, they're themselves. Or the same thing when it's a one on one with someone I mentor, someone I advise. Those situations, having this data, I think even if I started the conversation it would be*

*much more natural than in a classroom setting where they're already sitting with eyes glazed over when they walk in the room.”* (OR/OIC)

- “*In the classroom we talk about the integrative experience, so all the plebes and all the Corps curriculum work on something, and energy is the thing right now. My course director said we are going to integrate SHARP training into leadership discussions. But it would be interesting to integrate that as a plebe. You could take statistics and use them in different classes, math classes. It's very professional, we're going to talk today about this theory, let's go break into groups. We don't see that. And when we did the case study, I mean quite honestly, when we got about ten minutes in it was like, ‘Sir, we don't really want to talk about this made up case study, what we really want to talk about are the issues we're having.’ And so I think if it's a focus of the Academy, it enlightens the cadets' minds when we show it to them in different angles.”* (OR/OIC)

### **Interactions with SAPR Staff**

- **Faculty and staff members were familiar with SAPR staff or how to find information on how to contact them.**
  - “*At the trainings that we go to, I think everyone knows them.*” (Faculty)
  - “*If a cadet came to me and said I was sexually assaulted, I would not know immediately who to take them to but I feel confident that within 15 minutes I could reach out and get that information.*” (Faculty)
  - “*And that's probably the way the cadets feel too. They might not know exactly who to call or what to do according to the stated rules that they receive in the same three hours of training every year, which is where we get the names and we know who to pick up the phone and call. So I guess in that regard the training sessions are helpful because we know that there's an avenue which to go down and I think the cadets probably know it's there too, they just need to have a name and they can get the information when they need it.*” (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff have limited interaction with SAPR staff.**
  - “*I think probably once a year we get one of the school trained folks comes and gives a talk to the faculty in our department. So that's probably the only sort of mandated interaction. And then if you've ever had an incident where you've had a reason to interact with them, like helping somebody else or personally.*” (OR/OIC)

#### **OPPORTUNITY**

- ♦ An opportunity might exist to have more frequent interaction with SAPR staff and to present a common message to cadets about resources and roles.
- ♦ During these discussions a review of the incidence rates of USC might help give context to the problem.

- “It seems like every year it's about the same thing. They're showing you some of the stats and they want to remind you of who all the reporting, the restricted, unrestricted, that sort of stuff. I do think that the folks who come in are cognizant of the fact in my case that they're talking to a group of faculty and so they're gearing it towards our role. And they do generally then make it a discussion about if one of your students comes to you, right, then you need to understand the difference between restricted and unrestricted because of how they approach you.” (OR/OIC)
- **SAPR training for staff could be more detailed.**
  - “I think the next step to help faculty is to drill down a little bit more and say things like 90 percent of them happen on trip sections [hypothetical, not factual], bring that up. So when you're on a trip section, this is what you need to be aware of and this is what we've done to help you. It's mandatory you have three officers now per 20 cadets or whatever. Where are the danger areas that we need to know about, then what can we do to help? So I think that kind of information passed to the middle management, senior management, the strategic leaders, here is what helps us.” (OR/OIC)
  - “I think it's also timing. You're coming here and it's what, almost a year since the last time. So it's taken a year to talk about what happened last year. So I mean that whole time in between there has taken that long. The faster the product gets out there, ‘This is what is going on, these are the hot spots,’ the faster you can get on it. But to wait a year to say this is what happened last year, this might be a whole different place.” (OR/OIC)

## **Faculty and Staff Recommendations**

- **Share the results of studies to help inform the faculty and staff.**
  - “The Center for Counterterrorism sends out a monthly email newsletter, for example. They send it out to anyone who wants it. The email that goes out has a little snippet, almost like an early bird. And then you can click on that link and it will have a four or five page article that would then have something where you could get into the meat of your area of interest.” (OR/OIC)
  - “I don't know who you share the report with and then who subsequently it's shared with, but I'd be interested in reading the whole report because I'm

### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to give faculty and staff the tools they need to help the cadets in a timely, coordinated fashion.

### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to create a periodic communication plan for disseminating information that could be easily accessible when the occasion arises for discussions.

*interested in it. But, you're not going to get everybody because we don't have the time to read the whole report, and so is there a venue. So maybe it's through the SARC or a vignette based or do you do a deep dive on a particular thing and it's just something that you can add to your tool kit. Or it may spark you to click on the link to go to the full report to look at the full set of questions, and for the mathematicians to do the math and for the sociologists to read the reports. A primer to allow people to have something in their kit bag to have a discussion when the teachable moments arrive." (OR/OIC)*

- **Discuss issues in small groups with the cadets.**

- *"I think another thing too, small group sessions are really what works. We see that with the military training with the way they conduct the leader challenges now. There's not really any small group sessions where we talk about SHARP training. Because even when we follow up next week, it's me and my NCO that are going to tackle 30 cadets and talk to them about this stuff." (OR/OIC)*

- **Provide relevant, engaging, non-threatening training.**

- *"It was earlier this week, I teach plebes, I come in and three quarters of the class is wearing their dress grays with the neck that keeps it up and everything. And why are you wearing the dress grays? 'We had sexual assault class.' Awesome. And what potentially could be a very important class, we're going to make them wear their formal jacket with the high neck which all of them despise. So way to go planners in that instance where we've now associated that with punishment. So I think looking at it as a different way to access information, way to approach it. And so you hope the take away is, I know I can get information, I know there's people I can talk to, give me a good 15 minutes, but all of the particulars are going to be fuzzy." (Faculty)*

- **Provide a means for cadets to discuss unwanted gender-related experiences with cadets without kicking off a mandatory report.**

- *"If you saw a murder and you don't report it, it's not criminal. But if you have a sexual assault that's reported to you and you don't pass that on, we certainly could lose our position. Commands have lost their positions. And you have to report it. And this would include from SHARP training roommates, non-spouses that are cadets, for example boyfriend/girlfriend, there's no protection on any of that front. So oftentimes what you get are victims who have no support and who really can't engage faculty, which is what makes sexual assault cases so hard to*

OPPORTUNITY
◆ An opportunity might exist to evaluate the policies on who can take a restricted report of USC – current policies exclude many of the faculty and staff members who are closest to the cadets and could be a resource for seeking advice before making a report.

*prosecute. I don't know where I stand with this but from the victims perspective we're basically isolating him or her.”* (Faculty)

- “*How about just a provision that says if the victim comes and talks to someone and asks that they not report it, anybody can have that latitude.*” (Faculty)

### **Cultural Change**

The facilitator began this section by stating that some people believe the Academy can improve USC prevention and response by changing the culture and attitudes toward this issue. Participants were asked if they agreed and how such change could be made. The section ended with a question about the usefulness of a Dignity and Respect Code.

#### **Need for Cultural Change**

- Faculty and staff indicated there is a need for cultural change in addition to programs.
  - “*So it's got to be that paradigm shift where everyone is saying ‘I'm not okay with that and it's uncomfortable, I'm not a bitch about it, I'm just not cool with it.’*” (OR/OIC)
  - “*That goes back to your comment earlier about the Corps being responsible for it. It doesn't just have to be the person who the comment was directed at, but all the other people that are around that hear the comment and know it's inappropriate. And I think that's what we are trying to figure out now. And some of the cases I've heard about sexual assault has been away on a trip section, and other people have been around. And no one, for whatever reason, says anything. And I don't know what the right answer is to get at that so that everyone takes ownership of it and respects everyone. And I don't know how to necessarily get at that.*” (OR/OIC)
  - “*I'd be interested to see that from our standpoint are we doing a good job in helping them to appreciate each other. And so that you may have sexist views or you may have received it from others maybe when you were a new cadet or even a plebe. Like ‘I'm infantry, you're not, so you're nothing.’ Well, that may be the attitude that you come in with because your father and your grandfather and your great-grandfather were like that. By maybe by the time you become a firstie, not only do you still appreciate being an infantry soldier, but you also appreciate the other branches and what part they play. And so your whole mindset and world view of the person sitting next to you on your left and your right is totally different.*” (OR/OIC)
- Some people are not even aware they communicate bias.
  - “*I think a lot of it is also a cultural thing. And I hear that a lot where they say ‘I didn't think it was offensive but somebody else found it offensive.’ And then it goes back to that educational piece that I was talking about, where I'm not*

*shocked at all by these numbers at all. An example is, some females may not find it offensive but others do. I can't stand when people say you run like a girl. When I taught that to my soldiers as a commander it was like, 'Well, what's the big deal?' 'Well, you just said in so many words that women are less than men.' 'Well, I don't think that.' 'Well, you just did.' And literally they were puzzled, for like two hours they sat there and stared at me. It was like this two hour discussion with my CP in Iraq, because what they just said was rude to me. And they were like 'Well, girls don't hit as hard or they don't...' Those are the things that they bring into the culture. And then it goes back to the physical fitness aspect of 'Well, you guys are weaker.' 'Well, no, it's not weaker, we're different, you need to understand that, we're built different.'" (OR/OIC)*

- **The culture at the Academy might be changing from past years.**
  - *"I think the Academy is taking it seriously, I do. I've seen a shift not only in Army but also in the Academy."* (OR/OIC)

### **Affecting Cultural Change**

- **Faculty and staff indicated it would be difficult to engage cadet leadership in affecting some changes due to peer pressure.**
  - *"I think the peer leadership is so hard. I don't know what the reason is. Nobody wants to be rejected by their peers, it doesn't matter if it's two different classes, correcting cadets. Cadets don't correct cadets unless it's so blatant, so obvious that someone is going to get hurt or someone is going to get in trouble. I don't see how you can do that."* (Faculty)
- **Changing behaviors and attitudes requires the cadets to want to change.**
  - *"I don't know how you'd make headway against it. I think they're related but I don't know how you're going to make headway against the way they talk. We're a much cleaner group than we are in the Army. And they know in the Army it's power, it's domination, it's alcohol, all of these things are what we prize in our culture. Even if we have a cleaner version of it here, we're not going to get so clean and so artificial that they don't recognize that this is the way that people behave."* (Faculty)
  - *"I think culture is a tough one because if you look at the cadets compared to their regular college counterparts, I think their culture is a little bit better than what they see on the outside. And saying you need to straighten up a little bit, it's*

OPPORTUNITY
◆ An opportunity might exist to emphasize the professional aspect of being a cadet – cadets are the future leaders of the Army and correcting inappropriate behaviors at the Academy is training for how they might deal with problems on the battlefield.

*going to be difficult when they talk to their buddy who is at other schools in a much looser environment.”* (Faculty)

- **Some cultural changes can originate from the top down, but it is not the norm.**
  - *“I think it depends entirely on what kind of change you're talking about. President Obama says we are going to quit engaging in certain kinds of torture that we have previously not admitted as torture and the Army is the execute mentality, we're going to get on line with that, and that pushes a cultural change. You're not going to push other kinds of change, cultural change, from the top down but certain times you can. It was a policy change that then ripples into a cultural change but not all of them can work that way.”* (Faculty)
- **The competitive nature of the Academy impacts relationships among cadets.**
  - *“[Fear of damaging one's standing] That has occurred and that's part of the problem with them being able to engage in self-discipline, is inability to see that a correction could have a positive effect and not just a negative effect and the inability to see what culture they create when they don't make the correction.”* (Faculty)

### ***Additional Faculty and Staff Recommendations***

The final major area of discussion in the 2013 SAGR focus groups was titled simply “Additional recommendations for addressing USC and sexual harassment.” The purpose was to spend a few minutes reflecting on the general discussion of factors influencing USC at the Academy and to drive out any other good ideas from the participants on ways to reduce it. The facilitator ended the focus groups by asking for any final thoughts on issues and if there were any questions that were not asked but should have been.

### ***Final Thoughts***

- **Faculty and staff felt it is a challenge for leadership to balance rules of conduct for USMA cadets versus conduct typical of college-age students.**
  - *“We all juggle at some point trying to find the definitive line of where we look at them as college kids, and since we have all been college kids we act like college kids. There are certain things that you do in college. And so we want the kids to have that experience. But at the same time, this isn't a normal college, this is the United States Military Academy, where the bar is a little bit higher in terms of how they act and what they wear and what they do, because there's so many eyes that look at this place at any given time.”* (OR/OIC)
- **Faculty and staff indicated cadets will adjust their behavior when they perceive a consequence.**
  - *“Fear is a powerful tool. If they think they are going to get kicked out because they know the Academy has to downsize, they are going to take their grades a*

*little more seriously. So if there's a fear that there's a zero tolerance, the repercussions of it, jail, I think that may go a ways.”* (Faculty)



## **Chapter 4: U.S. Naval Academy Midshipmen**

Seven midshipman focus group sessions were conducted at USNA from April 8-11, 2013. Each session was scheduled for a 90-minute period. There was one session each for men and women held for freshmen, seniors, and sophomores and juniors combined. A single mixed-gender session of juniors and seniors was also held. Each session had between eight and thirteen students.

### ***Sexual Assault***

The 2013 SAGR focus groups devoted a majority of the time to topics designed to gather students' perceptions on unwanted sexual contact (USC) and their recommendations for reducing the prevalence. In each topical area the facilitator made an effort to drive out causes for behaviors or situations being discussed and recommendations for improvement.

The discussions began by sharing with the participants the USC rates from the 2012 SAGR and asking whether midshipmen had seen those results. Midshipmen were asked to discuss why the rates have increased across the past four survey years. Additional questions were posed for their knowledge of where incidents were most likely to occur, their thoughts on victims experiencing multiple incidents of USC over time, and the role of "sexting" and pornography. Midshipmen further contributed comments on the role alcohol plays in USC and when during the day it is more likely to occur.

### ***Familiarity with Incidence Rates from 2012 SAGR***

- Midshipmen indicated that the incidence rates from the 2012 SAGR survey were about what they expected or higher.
  - *"Just from other friends at other colleges because I know the civilian sector does this as well, the number seems normal to me. The stats from other colleges, was it like one in four are sexually harassed and one in eight are raped. It seems normal to me – it shouldn't be normal but normal statistic-wise." (Female)*
  - *"I think it seems about accurate. I think what's important to recognize, it's not just at the Academy that this is occurring, it's outside the gates, it's on summer training. It's not just this body of students. It's everywhere, so I think it's accurate." (Mixed Gender Session)*

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ An opportunity might exist for DMDC to work with the Academies to prepare a briefing or handout of 2012 SAGR and future survey results tailored to each Academy.</li><li>◆ An opportunity might exist to provide midshipmen additional opportunities to discuss USC occurring at the Academy to establish a knowledge base of understanding based on facts and informed perspectives.</li><li>◆ Another opportunity might be to dispel any unfounded beliefs and replace them with information from the survey, actual reports and cases, the SARC/SHAPE staff, and leadership experiences.</li></ul>

- “*They surprised me I guess. Where I come from, it's not very common at all. The fact I came here my freshman year I heard about it, it was kind of alarming.*” (Male)
  - “*Definitely higher than I thought it would be. I haven't noticed anything.*” (Female)
  - “*I've never observed any of this or been a witness to any of this. And like statistically I should know many people who this has happened to. And I mean it's not something you talk about, but I've heard nothing.*” (Female)
  - “*I think it's high in comparison to total DoD. I think Department of Defense and the whole picture, like enlisted and I think of it being a little rougher out there, versus the Naval Academy, so to me I think it's high.*” (Female)
  - “*It's hard to imagine. I can't picture of the guys I know ever doing anything like that. So I think it's hard to conceptualize in reality that happening here.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen varied in their opinions about the incidence rates for USC, especially for men.**
  - “*Definitely higher than I would have expected just because I don't really see it happening around me at all.*” (Male)
  - “*I assumed it's going to be at least some number [for men]. It seems low so I think that's a good thing.*” (Male)
  - “*I was thinking about the same thing about the male statistics, I mean at least for me because I'm a female it's something that they would seem a lot less likely to want to talk to me about because, especially in today's culture it seems like a little more taboo for men to speak about.*” (Female)
  - “*With males there's a whole other aspect that comes into reporting unwanted sexual contact because they may be afraid people will think they're homosexual when they're not. There's more social pressure almost for a male to report sexual contact. So I don't know if that affects the rates but I know we talked about that in SHAPE, things like that, so I don't know.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that training and emphasis by leadership has had an effect on midshipmen's understanding of what constitutes USC and their willingness to acknowledge experiencing it.**
  - “*Or that with more education about what these definitions encompass before they would have said 'No, I've never had unwanted sexual contact.' But when they learned about what is considered unwanted sexual contact, 'Yeah, okay, that's happened to me.'*” (Female)

- “*Another thought I had, I remember our SHAPE training and SAVI training from plebe [freshman] and youngster [sophomore] year was virtually a joke. It was very hard for people to control the atmosphere in there when it was only midshipmen leading it. They have changed that more recently and make it more serious. They have the officers and senior enlisted come in with that. That was only in the past year. I'm thinking maybe from 2010 to 2012 that might be a reason why we didn't see much of it, the perception of all that SHAPE training.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that positive actions have already been taken to combat USC.**
  - “*A lot of bad apples have been kicked out. That's my opinion and I have some others to share it. Not here, but a lot of bad apples have been kicked out. So the survey came out and everyone was, 'Well, a lot of people have been kicked out.' So we're guessing some of those people might have been the offenders and things have been getting better.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*It's important to consider that we might be so shocked by this because we are coming into the school as plebes with all of this, coming in as we come in, not necessarily us having done those actions. So I think we have to consider why we're being shocked so much, because it might have been drastically reduced this year.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen believe that rules and restrictions inhibit their social development and maturity.**
  - “*I think you hit a bigger issue at the Academy in general that I don't want to get into too deep, but that empowerment to midshipmen is virtually nonexistent. That would be a great place to start but I can tell you from my own personal experience and listening to other people's experiences, the more leadership role, responsibility you get at the Academy the more you're micromanaged by people who have an agenda they want you to adhere to that would be in charge of taking care of. It's not an effective model for empowering people to make decisions that have actual outcomes they can avoid mistakes.*” (Male)
- **Midshipmen noted that stopping sexual assault is not simple.**
  - “*So we know everything is happening because of pressure from way up top. Like a knee-jerk reaction, something needs to happen right now. Here's what we are going to do, here's how we are going to stop rape at the Academy. Fundamentally in this country we treat rape as extremely different than any other crime. You're a convicted rapist or sexual assault, your name goes on a list, you're treated like that for the rest of your life. You have to tell people where you live. So because of that you could even say people who rape others and things like that, is something fundamentally different in their heads. And all the training*

*that we're going to do could might stop a few. But those who are going to rape will probably do so.”* (Male)

- **Midshipmen shared that there was a rumor that some midshipmen were dishonest on the 2012 survey.**
  - *“I've heard a couple guys talking about joking they put down false answers for the survey also because they thought it was funny. Like a couple in my company that did that. And probably a couple of numbers come from there.”* (Female)
  - *“I heard when we started having the SHAPE rover things on weekends, you were saying because of the gender relation surveys. And you said you heard how they go about they made these horrible things up on their survey. I don't know if that's screened for at all, I don't know if you can screen for that, but I also feel like whether it's possible it's a girl or in this case there's two guys joking about what they put on it. They were teammates and they thought it would be funny. I doubt a lot of guys do that. I would hope they wouldn't do it, it's just a hindrance for like their own friends, their fellow sex.”* (Mixed Gender Session)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ♦ Note that on the 2012 SAGR there are several analyses to detect false responses – on the issue of males marking “female” and claiming to have experienced unwanted sexual contact, there were no instances at USNA.

### ***Location of Unwanted Sexual Contact***

- **Midshipmen indicated that the dormitory (Bancroft Hall) is the most likely location for USC to occur.**
  - *“Bancroft Hall.”* (Male group response)
  - *“Probably study period visiting each other's rooms or hanging out.”* (Male)
  - *“Probably just in the Hall itself, that's where you end up spending most of your time. And you end up in situations where you have people watching a movie in the room or just two people hanging out, and you know, if there's nobody there....”* (Mixed Gender Session)
  - *“Likely Bancroft because we can't leave the yard and there's nowhere to go in the yard. So everyone lives and stays in Bancroft primarily. It's our professional and personal lives blended together in the building.”* (Female)
- **Midshipmen were not surprised that USC would occur on campus.**
  - *“I wasn't too surprised when I heard most of it was on campus. We spend so much of our time here. Liberty hours is only a very short time, maybe 10 percent*

*of our work week or something like that. So the fact we spend the majority of our time here is more likely to happen on campus. It just makes sense to me.”* (Male)

- “*I don't think that surprises me that much. This is where we spend the majority of our time. It's where we live, it's not just where we go to school. It's not that shocking if it happens, it happens here a lot.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen found it difficult to understand how USC could occur in the dorm without someone knowing, though this is a consistent finding in surveys and focus groups that dormitories are the most likely location.**
  - “*Surprises me. Maybe it happens elsewhere than Bancroft. I think it would be very hard to do something like that in one of the dorms because everybody is so close. You can hear through the walls.*” (Male)
  - “*As plebes we have a lot of difficulty of getting privacy of any sort. So it's surprising to us that that much shady stuff can go on and not get observed by anyone.*” (Female)
  - “*There's someone constantly patrolling. There's a watch standard who is patrolling around company area who would pick up on things like that. And on top of that as part of the sexual assault stamp down we received from the chain of command this past semester there's been additional watches added on the weekends in the middle of the night and additional random musters to double and triple and quadruple check to see things like that aren't going on. If there's two people patrolling the deck it's difficult to get away with going into somebody else's room.*” (Male)
- **Midshipmen indicated that the new watches were instituted because something had to be done to combat the incidents of USC.**
  - “*It was in direct response to that survey. You can't have those results and not do anything about it. It's not an option. You can't choose no action when you're faced with results of the Service Academies and the Naval Academy presented. Honestly, what more can you do to help stop things from possibly happening or occurring in the Hall? And out of all the ideas that came up that was honestly the most realistic and the most feasible one to do that would stop something from occurring.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*I think it's weird. The higher ups were shocked when the numbers came out. But by the looks of it it's been the same for the past six years. Across the board*

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ♦ An opportunity might exist to provide additional information about the intent and consistency of “rover” watches across companies, including having students give testimonies to the value of the watches, to help midshipmen accept the duty as necessary and helpful, rather than resent it.

*it's been the same. They didn't really do much to change the culture of this place, until this year by implementing this new watch and having the CNO [Chief of Naval Operations] come here. I felt like they could have slowly gone into it instead of throwing everything at us at once. They've had the numbers for the past six years. I feel like people would be more accepting of the whole idea of watch if they slowly implemented different things instead of throwing a watch at us.”* (Mixed Gender Session)

- **Midshipmen indicated that the new watches help deal with midshipmen who have been drinking heavily.**
  - “*They are more effective with dealing with drunken people for sure.*” (Male)
  - “*They found people who were out past taps that shouldn't have been in town drinking. They were finding people who were in a room who shouldn't have been in a room together before they instituted that watch, and I'm not aware of any increase in the number of people that found or even people specifically tied to this new protocol that they found in the room together that shouldn't have been.*” (Male)
  - “*Originally it was a freshman that would stand watch or maybe a sophomore. Hopefully they would intervene if they saw a really drunk person, but they might have still been too scared or the drunken upperclassman wouldn't listen to them. The watches aren't very popular but I think it is more effective to have an upperclassman standing watch to break up anything.*” (Female)
- **Some midshipmen felt that the new watches are not all that effective.**
  - “*They don't do any more than the CMOD does.*” (Male)
  - “*I've stood watch before and walking around the company area, if somebody wanted to go into somebody's room it would be easy for somebody to do without me seeing. I don't think it's going to deter anybody from going in somebody's room, it's more if they come on the deck drunk and they're being a nuisance, then I'll notice they're around and I can escort them off or call the officer of the watch. If somebody wanted to go into somebody's room they could do it. That's not going to deter anybody.*” (Male)
  - “*I would say that I also am not sure that's the most effective thing because we have rules, the doors are supposed to be propped open and all lights are supposed to be on. But if somebody's going to be doing something like this it's real easy to shut a door. And rovers aren't going around opening up closed doors and checking on people inside. In my opinion that would be how it happens.*” (Female)
  - “*From personal experience on the rover watch, when you're a female on the rover watch for me I have been harassed on rover watch. And when you're*

*walking in the middle of the night and no one's there, you're walking by yourself, an unarmed female, I just don't agree for the rover for many reasons, maybe because I've had a bad experience on rover." (Female)*

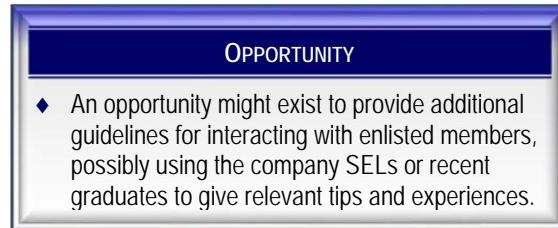
- **Some midshipmen do not take the new watches seriously.**
  - "No, an annoyance." (Female)
  - "Upperclassman don't take it seriously." (Female)
  - "People don't take it seriously because they feel like it's another obligation, another burden. It frustrates them more." (Female)
  - "It took on the nickname of 'Rape Watch.' There's some cynicism built into it, like punishing the majority for actions of the few." (Male)
- **Midshipmen indicated that the new watches should focus on prevention of USC in addition to response and be better coordinated.**
  - "My thing is, I think the watch fights the problem or combats the problem. And instead I think you can fix the problem before it happens. I mentioned this before, I really think the Academy should be focusing on, like take alcohol education seriously because all these sexual assault cases are alcohol related. It really needs, they have to start, someone said in Forrestal last night, female empowerment. If they're more confident and they're not drinking abusively, that's one way to front the problem. I think that needs to be addressed instead of having a CMOD is going to come and rescue you. You need to do something about it yourself." (Mixed Gender Session)
  - "It's clearly not just an issue that women are having. Although a higher percentage of them are experiencing it, it's just not an issue that just women are having. As much as I don't want to throw my hands in the air and say it's a problem we can't fix, I don't think that any drastic changes like putting men and women in different dormitories is going to help it. I think it's a problem. As much as people don't want to address it as a brigade-wide thing it is." (Male)
- **Some midshipmen indicated that USC is not likely to occur on official trips.**
  - "I definitely think that trips and stuff traveling with teams, it's always good to have an officer go with you. I'm on a team, we generally have an officer comes with us for places we go. That's, just having that supervision is always a good idea. It's not part of every team." (Male)
  - "I'm in a women's club and we travel a couple times a semester. We never had any problems as far as I know. I think people make smart decisions. But I can see how something could happen. I think it's proof you can still make good choices if something's happened." (Female)

- Midshipmen indicated that some trips are not supervised as much as others and this might increase risk.
  - “Anecdotally my plebe year I went on a trip with a club. It was supposed to be an intercollegiate thing like a conference, people from different colleges come together and have an open forum to discuss a certain topic. I'm trying to keep this anonymous. We all pitched in for a hotel room and so did all the other colleges pitch in for hotel rooms within that same environment. And it was just, it was terrible, the whole night. Miscellaneous people were coming in and out. I went into one room, I don't even want to know what was going on in there. It was just bad. Situations like that if they do come up, and maybe they're rare and a few, I just experienced my one, but it was, argh. No supervision.” (Female)
- Proximity to Annapolis contributes to opportunities for midshipmen to engage in improper behaviors.
  - “I'm not sure how it could be improved from our standpoint because they're all pretty much civilian owned businesses, so I don't know. I know the bars, mids have a really bad reputation at the bars for drinking too much, which I'm sure as you've said has a big effect on it. I'm not sure if the bars could limit but I don't know how you could get them to limit.” (Male)
  - “Just a suggestion may be to make being more watchful in town more effective. I have a friend at a military college, and the great thing about there is the cadets would go into town. All the bars and all the hotels in the town had the commandant's cell phone on speed dial. And the commandant was more than willing to come down and clean up any cadets or midshipmen getting into trouble.” (Male)
  - “Weekends, evening probably after a bar or something after alcohol has been involved.” (Male)
  - “There are certain bars where dancing happens and certain bars where it gets, they are known as dirty bars. Certain people only go to those bars.” (Male)
- Midshipmen indicated that Annapolis is generally safe and meets midshipmen's needs.
  - “We do but we're all in uniform [freshmen], so we can't get away with anything because everybody's watching, and everybody knows you're not supposed to do that. They know exactly what's expected of us and we know they know. We are generally pretty well behaved.” (Female)

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to establish a more focused relationship with community leaders and business proprietors to address sexual assault and make both Annapolis and USNA a safer environment.

- **Midshipmen indicated that there are other locations on campus where USC might occur.**
  - “*Just there are a lot of study halls, so there are a lot of empty rooms. It's hard to say. If you really wanted to find an empty room.*” (Male)
  - “*Maybe the locker rooms are another place I could think of that happening.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that there is less supervision and surveillance of midshipmen on campus during summer.**
  - “*I know that there's almost no oversight essentially during summer school. During the academic year we're pretty much locked down pretty tight. I don't really see incidents occurring during the academic year. It would be a lot, that would be a lot more risky and lot more difficult to pull off anyway.*” (Male)
  - “*No, everyone's pretty much on your own [during summer duty]. You're in a group but not under supervision because you're adults.*” (Male)
- **Midshipmen on summer training/sea duty can experience some risky situations.**
  - “*Summer training you spend a week in each community and get a feel for them. A large number of the kids from that class all down there for the month going through the different trainings together. It's just people hang out for the summer together. I think it's naive to think you're not going to have relationships there within that. You have men and women together on their summer training, which is a relaxed training. You're busy during the day but you have the evenings off. You have to remember people are still going to have attractions to each other.*” (Female)
  - “*The ratio. Every summer training I've been on, I've been one of two, maybe three females with 20 plus males. So the ratio, it increases your chances. When you go out to have fun – a girl is a girl is a girl kind of thing. When you're in a big group you're going to get attention. It's more focused and more risky I guess, with things that possibly could happen.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*I had a unique youngster summer experience, put like 40 mids including eight plebes or extra females on an all-male ship that just got back from an eight-month deployment which made no sense. I don't know the details of it, but I know there was an assault within two weeks. It was bad timing, it's unfortunate. So it's odd, that's not the norm but that's an example of when it happened.*” (Mixed Gender Session)



- “*There's always people flowing around in the, just on the Academy aside from your rooms, that's so much less supervision, you don't have people checking in on you every day. I know last summer they us housed in the BOQs and the hotels. We had rooms to ourselves, they didn't come check in on the rooms unless word was somebody was hurt or something like that. You could pretty much do what you want in the rooms. My youngster summer we were on the ship and you showed up to your muster with your running mate and went and did your thing. But other than that they didn't check up on you. Since you're not part of the ship's crew it's easier for you to slip through the cracks.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Midshipmen indicated that alcohol is a contributing factor in most USC.**
  - “[When asked how campus could be made safer] I guess it would depend how many of the cases had alcohol involved? [65% of women who experienced USC in 2012 indicated that alcohol was involved either by them, the offender, or both.] So I think one possible solution would be to have a drunk watch. If you know somebody's imbibed too much, they're not their usual self on liberty hours, definitely either have some sort of system where you keep all those kinds of people together and keep an eye on them or have some sort of watch you can take care of them, keep them from getting into trouble.” (Male)
  - “Just to hit on the drunk watch, I don't know if you heard, they have upperclassmen at the Gate 1 and they call, like my company had a couple of firsties in my company and they were just called a CDO of whatever company. They would come down and get them and make sure they got to the room safely. I think it was enacted this year, before I would think even if you are of age coming back drunk, I'm going to get in trouble for just being drunk or whatever, just walking back. So the fact that it's being handled by mids, it is mids calling the CDO saying you got such and such, come get him, make sure he gets back to Hall safely. I think it's a good thing, it's encouraging because people are going to come back and not scared, not do stupid things since they're being taken care of.” (Male)
  - “On that subject a lot of people when they're drunk and intoxicated these rates increase. Usually alcohol is related with this. And when people come back to the Hall they come back at odd hours, they go into the wrong room or on purpose or on accident. It was like instead of paying for a hotel or you're living somewhere like at a regular college you have to come back to somewhere that's full of people. I think it's more likely to happen.” (Female)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The use of alcohol as a contributing factor in USC is a pervasive finding; many policies have been tried over the years to diminish the use of alcohol and should continue.</li> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist for continued evaluation of the way collateral misconduct is handled and of the effectiveness of the new watches in mitigating dormitory situations involving midshipmen who are under the influence.</li> </ul>

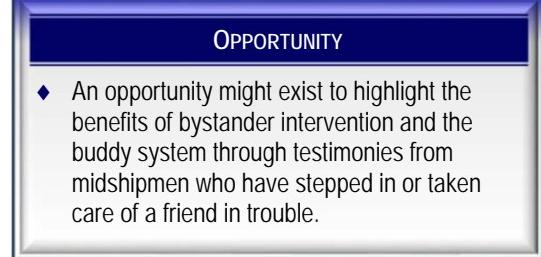
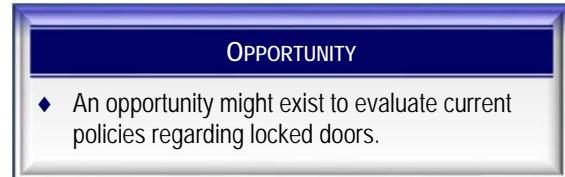
- “*Honestly, and I'm not suggesting a solution for this, it's an observation, I think a lot of these problems, even in the Hall or on cruise, they all seem to stem from alcohol. Even in the Hall we've all seen, we all know people who come stumbling back in. Yes, you're going out to have a good time, I understand that. But even on cruise there's this mentality you need the alcohol to supply the fun or the alcohol makes it a party. We're grappling between being in the Academy and being in college. And then bridging a gap between being a 21 year old college student and trying to be a professional. It doesn't match. You have officers in the Hall by day and we're under their care and you're under the microscope even if you're not a plebe. All bets are off at night and on weekends. It's just inconsistent.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that some policies on drinking are designed to keep midshipmen safe but result in other problems.**
  - *“I think there's that bit of a Catch 22 if you want to safely get back to the Academy and you do the right thing and don't drive, if you're intoxicated, if you had blown a certain level when you come through the gate you're going to get in contact trouble. But you're trying to get back to the Hall safely with a buddy. At the same time you can't get anywhere because you can't drive a vehicle at that point, so you can't safely get to a hotel. I think there's a bit of, there's no right or easy solution to that problem so people are getting in trouble when they're intoxicated. They can't come back here safely in those situations and get anywhere safely. There are random breathalyzers. Also FDOs can come around in companies and breathalyzers.”* (Female)
  - *“Asking for more trouble. We do have sponsors but it's unrealistic that they're going to come pick you up. I know my sponsor wouldn't pick me up at 2:00 in the morning. She'll leave the back door unlocked. But at the same time not every sponsor is going to be open, if they have young kids or they're an older couple they're not going to be open to leaving the door unlocked at 2:00 in the morning after you come back from the bar.”* (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that the policies for gaining access to campus after one has been drinking are not clear.**
  - *“Don't we have that system now, because over the weekend we have two people who stand a watch. If you get called up in your company that somebody from your company is down at the gate you have to go down and pick them up. We have a system, I don't know what the policy is how drunk you are to be called to come get them or what that is.”* (Female)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to apply policies more consistently, share the rationale for them, and continue monitoring effectiveness to make adjustments.

- “*I think it's a judgment call from whoever is standing the watch. I think they take down your name if they have to escort or call somebody to escort you up. That makes some people think, ‘Oh, I'm too drunk, I'm not going back to the yard, I'm just going to wander around.’ I think there's a negative side of that.*” (Female)
  - “*A possible adaptation of that rule could be to require them to have a person accompanying them on to the yard that is there, buddy or whatever, to get them back to their room and make sure there's no trouble on the way there. If they're doing the breathalyzer and they're blowing above [some limit], ask if they have a friend who isn't drunk or only mildly with alcohol, then they can take you back.*” (Female)
- **Some policies seem to be an over-reaction.**
  - “*They restrict us so much that once you have an opportunity to do something a lot of people go overboard. It's like a pendulum. A few years back we had weekday liberty every day for everybody except plebes pretty much. Now nobody really gets liberty except for the weekends. But other than maybe trying to instill a sense of actual responsibility earlier by giving more freedoms or something like that, I don't see the culture changing. That's really the fundamental issue.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Some midshipmen indicated policies about dating and relationships cause more problems than they solve.**
  - “*I feel like everyone here, it's hard to learn how to have healthy relationships when it's taboo, it's meant to be unhealthy. Like healthy relationships are taboo because the no fraternization and all that stuff. Another point to me is the fact we can't have relationships encourages almost a worse hook up culture than you see in normal college because you can only hook up once. If you make a habit out of it that becomes a relationship and that can get you in trouble. It's less risky to hook up once. Creates a lot of dangerous situations.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*The fact they separate men and women so much is the reason why all these things keep occurring. If they put us in situations where we actually had to work together or we weren't separated all the time, there wasn't this huge barrier between us, I feel that brother/sister bond that everybody says should be there would actually be there. We would look out for one another a lot more because we were a lot closer than we are now.*” (Mixed Gender Session)

- **Midshipmen indicated that Bancroft Hall could be made safer by reevaluating the door locking policies and installing locks with keys for each room.**
  - “Would be nice if each room had their own lock and you had your own key like your own apartment or something like that. [Doors can only be locked from the inside.] The whole company's locked or I think it's the whole brigade has the same door so there's your chief or CC or something has a copy of the key, or main office. When we lock our doors during winter break they can all get back in.” (Female)
  - “The thing with locking the doors is if you're not communicating with your roommates and letting them know you're locking the doors and they get locked out, which has happened in my room a few times, you take a trip to the bathroom in the middle of the night and you're locked out because your roommate locked the door. It sometimes backfires. And we don't have individual keys. So that's a bit of an issue. It's less of a hassle to not lock your door at all.” (Female)
  - “I know you can lock your door after 10:00 o'clock but that should be more widely known. I know a lot of people don't know that. I've heard lots of people say no, you're never allowed to lock your door. That could be an option of more communicating that.” (Female)
- **Allowing midshipmen to choose their roommates could make them feel more secure.**
  - “One important policy, I think it varies by company here from what I've heard at least. You should be able to pick your roommates here rather than forcibly assigned to live with someone because I think that in all honestly it will help keep things in checks and balances almost. And I know I've been able to pick my roommates. I think it's helped like getting along in the pressure and fluidity of getting things done. That's a policy thing I think should be allowed even for plebes.” (Male)
- **Midshipmen indicated that having a plan and a buddy system are good prevention steps.**
  - “It's a lot like if your roommate is going out, if you have them looking after you, one doesn't drink excessively or something. I know that would be like have a plan in place before you go out.” (Female)



- “*The Academy is really good at telling you that you're wrong and you screwed up with something and don't do this, don't do this, don't drink. Instead of focusing, okay, you're going to drink but let's focus on emphasizing having a buddy, having a plan before you go out. The Academy is much quicker to blame and punish rather than focus on responsibility, take responsibility for your actions, and being responsible for what you're going to do that night.*” (Female)

### **Time When Incidents Occur**

- **Midshipmen indicated that they behave differently after the duty day is over.**
  - “*There's also a problem men and women are supposed to interact and treat each other as professionals and as equals during the week. On the weekend everyone heads out and is dressed up, and is drinking downtown and basically trying to hook up. Suddenly the whole environment of professionalism and the respecting each other disappears because it's the weekend. You're supposed to come back to the Academy and look at the people you just saw who were out acting like fools dressed up.*” (Male)
  - “*Realistically if you want to diminish sexual assault you have to change basic tenants about the school itself. Not lock us up for five days at a time and let us go crazy on weekends.*” (Male)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to help foster a stronger attitude of professionalism among midshipmen and instill a sense of duty 24/7 by discussing the types of behaviors that will be expected on active duty and making the commitment to uphold the same standards during off duty hours.

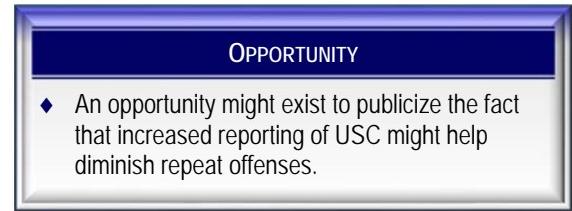
### **Multiple Incidents of Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- **Some midshipmen thought it more likely that multiple incidents of USC would involve the same offender.**
  - “*What if you have one guy that's drunk and he's wandering all across Bancroft which is right there and everybody is literally within an acre of land. He can go and do it multiple times on the same drunk binge.*” (Male)
  - “*I guess the same person. Just hearing from other people from other colleges that I know, getting harassed, likely the same person. I think the person doing it isn't in the right frame of mind if they're sexually assaulting or harassing someone. If they don't get caught they keep doing it again.*” (Male)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to publicize that, on average, victims experience more than one incident of USC; a fact that can be used to motivate victims to come forward to stop further experiences and stop an offender from approaching others.

- “*More often than not it's the same person. One person trying to impress somebody or goofing around and it's, it just is taken the wrong way every time.*” (Male)
- **Other midshipmen thought multiple incidents of USC would be more likely to involve different offenders or offenders targeting multiple people.**
  - “*It's think it's more likely to be different people honestly, rather than the same person.*” (Male)
  - “*I feel it would be one person would target different people versus there being one victim.*” (Female)
- **Some midshipmen expressed concern that there might be contributing factors when someone indicates experiencing more than one incident of USC.**
  - “*The fact it happens multiple times to the same person means somebody somewhere is not doing enough to prevent it. Maybe it's the watch or something....*” (Male)
  - “*Unfortunately I think there are individuals who no matter how much training they have, no matter how many times they are turned away, it doesn't click with them. They either don't see the line or they're getting mixed signals, whatever it is, but they're repeatedly going after one person or a group of individuals.*” (Female)
  - “*I feel if you don't tell someone, if you don't stick up for yourself and someone doesn't stick up for him and stop him the first time they're likely to continue the behavior. I think so [behaviors progress], a lot with the comments and stuff. If someone calls you something and you don't stick up for that, then they feel like they can push it farther and farther until you actually say something or don't.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that some offenders learn they can get away with certain behaviors.**
  - “*The problem is it doesn't get reported. I don't know exactly what the victim's reason would be. I'm looking to speculate on that, it could be any reason, it could be personal. But that's just one thing I'm thinking about, the number of people that it had happened to versus the number of people report it. More people are doing it and nobody is giving half a shit.*” (Male)
  - “*Not so much getting away with it. But you do it once, nobody reports it. Then it becomes, all right, nobody really cares if I do this, then they continue to do so.*” (Male)



- **Midshipmen indicated that unwanted behaviors can progress for a variety of reasons.**
  - “*It is just being able to step up and say ‘No, I don't want this,’ then you're going to have to put up with the guy's hurt ego and him making fun of you and whatever. That's not just here, I think that's everywhere.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*It becomes about you getting in trouble. That's part of the environment, part of the atmosphere we have here. Might have started that both people were consensual but because you risk getting in trouble they don't report what they feel to anyone because they feel it would go up the chain of command. And it will come back at you for the wrong reason.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*If there's alcohol involved, especially if there's any underage person near that instance then you have that that you're worried about. You're worried about I was drinking and some people, as they drink, I know one of my friends ran into this problem, she gets worse at saying no as she drinks.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Midshipmen indicated that multiple offenses can occur because victims do not come forward to stop the offender.**
  - “*People aren't coming forward.*” (Female)
  - “*When it gets found out it gets taken care of. People don't come forward. It changes the whole dynamic of whatever group.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that social immaturity contributes to unwanted behaviors.**
  - “*I agree with that. You can't teach social skills. If somebody's awkward and doesn't know where the line is, like you said, they're not going to know.*” (Male)
  - “*I think in general the sexual maturity of the brigade is pretty low. We're stuck here all the time. We don't really interact with people outside this place. They try to make everything gender neutral. I can see the line blurs quickly. With the stress people get aggressive. There's no interaction with people outside. People are socially awkward. To tell you the truth I can see how the lines get blurred.*” (Male)
- **Male midshipmen offered several recommendations for addressing social immaturity.**
  - “*If you just trust the brigade. People are going to handle it. When you box everyone up for five days in a row and only let them out for two days people are going to try to go crazy because they have so much stress to relieve, where in the past they've had weekday liberty and it hasn't been an issue.*” (Male)

- “I think the demands of the Academy itself would keep people in check. You can't go out and get wasted, black out and wake up for class at 7:00 in the morning. That's just not possible. People are going to have to be responsible if they want to pass their classes and social up and complete their requirement. [Learn from mistakes?] Exactly. Then you have to regulate yourself.” (Male)
- “A common teaching thing is if you treat people like children they'll act like children. If you treat people like adults, they'll act like adults.” (Male)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to better explain rules and restrictions, emphasizing the rationale to make the Academy the safest living environment possible.
- ◆ Another opportunity might exist to evaluate rules to give more latitude where possible, engaging midshipmen in ways to monitor their own behavior.

### **Sexting, Pornography, Flirting, and Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- **Midshipmen’s opinions about the issue of pornography varied.**
  - “I feel like each battalion has their own personality and each company has their own characters. When you're shoved in the back around seventh wing with finals, our final time is really stressful times, people like to have catharsis. They will throw miscellaneous things out the window or throw water balloons or blast porn out the windows.” (Female)
  - “I've never heard of anyone blaring porn, so I lived in fourth wing, it's the opposite side.” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that sexting is a problem that interferes with attempts to reduce sexist behavior.**
  - “I've never heard porn being an issue but I have heard of sexting being an issue, things being brought up, pictures, or a text message being brought up against someone. I think that's a bigger issue than porn.” (Female)
  - “Social media isn't helping it at all either with being able to post something and not have anonymity. If someone posts a picture of something that they saw happen during the day and it happens to be a girl, 100 people will like it because they can and there are no consequences. I think that is definitely a hump in this direction toward no sexist behavior.” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that the social dynamics at the Academy might be different than other schools.**
  - “[Discussing the difference between midshipmen and officers.] They get to go home and have sexual relationships as much as they want. Guys are on the Internet Googling half-naked chicks. A lot of that stuff gets out of hand pretty

*quick. As far as sexual relation goes, guys are going to turn to the Internet. It creates this air of what is not real. Then the jokes come out, look at this, whole lack of disrespect and what is actually a real relationship between individuals goes out the window.” (Male)*

### **Sexual Harassment and Sexist Behavior**

This major section of the focus groups posed a hypothesis about the relationship of verbally offensive behaviors, such as sexual harassment and sexist comments, on USC. The facilitator began similar to the first section of the focus groups by sharing results from the 2012 SAGR on rates of sexual harassment and sexist behavior at the Academy over the past four surveys and hearing the reactions. Midshipmen also provided thoughts on the subjective nature of these behaviors and why they are offensive to some and not to others. The facilitator then gave additional findings based on 2012 SAGR that those men and women who experienced USC in the past year also tended to experience sexual harassment and sexist behavior at higher rates. Midshipmen commented on the possible relationships among these unwanted gender-related behaviors and what the impact might be of addressing the verbal behaviors and possibly reducing USC. Following up, the facilitator asked if cultural factors, such as attitudes of disrespect toward women, contributed to USC. This section ended with a discussion of recommendations for decreasing sexual harassment and sexist behavior.

### **Familiarity with Incidence Rates from 2012 SAGR**

- **Midshipmen indicated that the incidence rates of sexual harassment and sexist behavior were about what they had expected.**
  - *“I’d say it’s about what I expected. There’s a lot more men than women here so I would say the women are going to feel more pressure in that.” (Male)*
  - *“If there’s like five guys hanging out in a room and a girl shows up, those comments and whatnot, you don’t automatically change gears, you don’t really change the way you’re speaking, at least in my company because you treat everybody the same. It’s how comfortable everybody gets with each other being in the same company and being around each other for years. There’s not as much of a filter.” (Male)*
  - *“I feel it’s about normal because we do make a lot of jokes. Sometimes we’ll have joke Fridays and stuff at our tables at meal. Depending on your squad leader, how your squad is, they might check out is this joke acceptable, but some squad leaders are like, I just want to hear a funny joke, I don’t care what it is.” (Male)*

#### **OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to continue emphasizing professionalism, respect, and civility to help diminish the future rates of unwanted gender-related comments.

- “*I'd say it's not that surprising [sexist behavior rate] considering that women have lower standards for their PRT [Physical Readiness Test] and their physical tests. More than likely they're going to get one comment on PRT day alone that women are getting unfair treatment because they don't have to fulfill the same standards that we hold.*” (Male)
  - “*Unfortunately I think the green is pretty accurate [sexual harassment rate for women]. It's still pretty prevalent. You're going to come into contact with someone at some point that's just, doesn't have a filter or doesn't know how to act professionally, say rude things.*” (Female)
- **Some midshipmen felt the rates were higher than what they expected.**
  - “*I think that number seems high. I mean we tell jokes, but if I told a joke, I've never had a girl come up to me and tell me that offended her. I feel like 60 percent, that's pretty high.*” (Male)
  - “*That's huge [sexist behavior rate]. Honestly I don't ever see anything, maybe I'm oblivious to it, I don't see anything like that. I know it's one question but it seems really high.*” (Male)
- **Some midshipmen felt the rates were lower than what they expected.**
  - “*I'm surprised 100 percent of women haven't seen sexist behavior.*” (Female)
  - “*I think it is 100 percent. Maybe there are people who don't realize what's going on or still feel intimidated even though it's just a survey.*” (Female)
  - “*I would say the men's statistics would be a little higher [sexist behavior]. Because of the environment here, you have so much pressure for them to perform so well, the number of pushups and things like that. I think that complicates. People say things that offhandedly they wouldn't think of it as sexist at first but it is.*” (Female)
  - “*I'm surprised that the men's isn't higher. Not every guy at the Academy is like the typical jock. And there's a huge stigma on that. People talk about all the time.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Midshipmen indicated that much of the sexist behavior and crude comments are from a small number of people.**
  - “*So I was going to say I agree that sexual harassment comes from a small percentage of men. I'd say yes, 94 percent sexist behavior, have experienced sexist behavior. I agree with that, that doesn't seem out of the blue. I don't know how you gauge this but one question would be from what percentage this comes from, because I was on an all-male team for the last two years and they were fabulous, not all of them. There were like two bad eggs, and they stink, but the others are amazing. I think I've noticed my plebe year, I think it is getting better.*

*And one thing, one attitude that isn't changing, the girls are here and get on board with it or you're the loser and the weirdo who's being sexist in class and drawing porn in someone's notebook. I don't think it's condoned as much, but it's still out there. I agree with that but it's a small percentage of men, I think, smaller.*" (Mixed Gender Session)

- *"There are certain individuals that are aggressive or come from their background or have something to prove. I don't think it takes a whole lot to affect, looking at the overall percentage of women, and the small number there are, it doesn't take a thousand guys with a bad attitude, over the course of a year there are definitely some, we talked about that before, they leave a bad impression, yes, you would report it, that definitely wasn't appropriate. I don't think 94 percent of the encounters you have overwhelming every day."* (Mixed Gender Session)
- *"I would say it's a small, small percentage of men. I know there's some cases in which men are sexually harassed but in the cases where it's men sexually harassing women, I know myself I'm a [area] major. And the firstee [area] majors are very close. There was only one [area] major and he was extremely, extremely inappropriate. He would say something to every girl, [area] major girl. There was nothing wrong with any of the other guys. He made a way to make every girl feel really uncomfortable. I think it's a small percentage of guys is the problem."* (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Midshipmen indicated that crude behavior tends to escalate if the offender is not confronted.**
  - *"I think one of the reasons it's high if no one says anything you'll push and push that line. I know we've told at our squad table some pretty dirty jokes, and we have three women in our squad. They haven't said anything. Maybe they have really tough skin or maybe it offends them and they don't say anything. That's like week after week, can we top that, can we top that. If they're not saying they're offended we are going to keep on doing it."* (Male)
  - *"I would agree with that. Any given environment women are outnumbered, maybe even 10 to one, 10 to two. They're not going to say anything if they're offended."* (Male)
- **Midshipmen believe that some sexist attitudes are the result of an initial trust barrier between the men and women.**
  - *"But there's definitely an initial barrier you have to break between the men and women here. I don't get mad at the women for that, I get mad at the men, the*

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to emphasize to students the importance of reporting lesser offenses and that general desensitization to crude and offensive behavior may foster a culture of acceptance.

*small percentage of men because I know it's like an artifact of what they've done to instill that, like that needs to be that trust barrier.”* (Mixed Gender Session)

- “*But definitely there's a barrier, a trust barrier between the men and women, and it does take a little while. We don't open up or completely trust you right off the bat. There's a little leg work that has to be done.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Midshipmen know when to limit their sexist comments.**
  - “*I feel like that's the culture, the environment of the Naval Academy. I definitely feel that. I think the things that are going to be said, if there are a bunch of guys hanging around, it will be much different than if there is even one girl there. That's what the Academy pushes. Yes, we want everything to be equal but don't offend women.*” (Male)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist for senior leaders to emphasize to midshipmen that it is their duty as leaders to curtail harmful language as it can harbor and instill resentment in the culture, which may directly affect their Academy.

- **Midshipmen indicated that there can be social repercussions if one midshipman confronts another about offensive comments.**

- “*At that moment, so it doesn't keep getting worse, ‘Okay, I'll step back.’ They don't really apologize for it but they'll stop doing it. But then right when the person who complains leaves, they go on to complain about that person. Say they didn't get that joke or stuff like that.*” (Male)
- “*There is certainly an attitude of hostility towards people who do that [confront someone], especially since you know people will get in trouble for saying that kind of stuff. If you get somebody in trouble for saying that kind of stuff then a majority of people who hear that you did that are going to be against you because there's such a community atmosphere here. They'll say I know that person, they didn't mean that. Now you just ruined their career. So you're a troublemaker. You hurt somebody else that the other people know very well. You don't want to be ostracized by the rest of the people for standing up for something. They'll think you were just trying to maliciously get this person in trouble or something like that. They'll gang up on you if you attack one of your own.*” (Male)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to change the culture to one where sexist comments are not acceptable in any context and to encourage students to challenge those who do use sexist language so that the environment is less tolerant of such behaviors.

- **Whether or not a midshipmen finds a comment offensive depends on the setting and nature of the comment.**
  - *“It's one of those things, for these statistics I don't think it's always a blatant, like I'm going to put this person down verbally saying something sexual in nature to him. It could be misperceived or whatever. You could be joking around with your buddies and somebody could hear that and goes into that number.”* (Male)
  - *“I think one of the reasons the male number isn't so high for sexist behavior rates for men is because, at least for some guys, what might be construed as sexist behavior for you guys, for us that's us joking around.”* (Mixed Gender Session)
  - *“I feel if you're naturally someone who's more standoffish you don't experience it as much as who's more open because they're not going to talk to you.”* (Mixed Gender Session)
  - *“Something that I've noticed, it seems among the guys a lot of times they'll start with crude and offensive jokes, but they know that females are present, but to circumvent saying it to you they'll say it to each other. It's like testing the waters. Slowly and slowly it becomes more and more sexist.”* (Female)
- **Female midshipmen indicated that they become immune to sexual harassment.**
  - *“On my team there are three females. There are 20 members on it, so there's a lot of crude and offensive behavior. Personally I think it's funny because I know they're not directing it at me, they're directing it at each other. They're really stupid, it's hilarious. But I understand it definitely happens a lot. You can tell when it's meant to be personal.”* (Female)
  - *“It's mostly based off how easily offended people are because it's everywhere. You can choose to take it personally or to recognize that it's not meant to be personal most of the time.”* (Female)

OPPORTUNITY
◆ An opportunity might exist to facilitate discussions of the relationship of unwanted gender-related behaviors and sexist comments to more aggressive unwanted sexual behaviors to increase awareness of the need for civility and respect no matter the context.

OPPORTUNITY
◆ An opportunity might exist to raise awareness and accountability by facilitating discussions around the value of changing the culture versus accepting it.

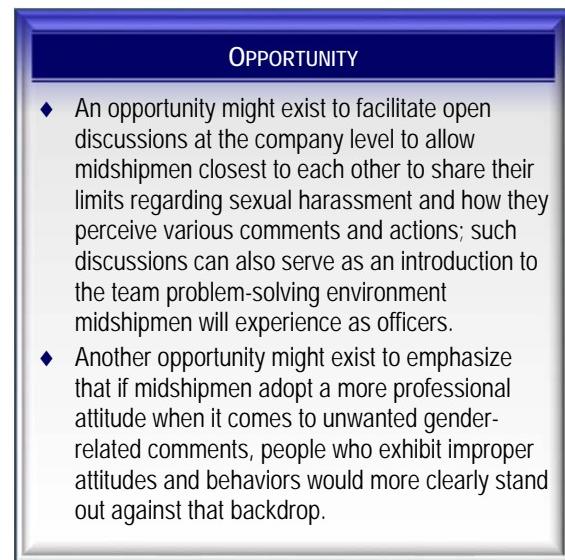
- Midshipmen indicated that they find it difficult to stand up to offensive comments.
  - “A lot of these jokes and comments are made at tables. I've had to stop jokes or taper jokes that I know are going in a direction I might not find offensive, but I have a female plebe in my squad who, my job is to watch out for her and the rest of my squad. But I know a lot of squad leaders encourage those kind of jokes, like more sexist or the more dirty the more funny they are. But those jokes can make people feel uncomfortable to come to meal or come to you, if I thought those jokes were okay and my plebe female didn't think they were okay, she's not going to come talk to me if I laughed at the joke.” (Female)
  - “I totally agree with that. But I think there are times especially for a plebe if you yourself take on a thoughtless person if you say I'm going to talk to my squad leader or whoever about it and they in turn talk to somebody or the direct person, it's a bad day because when that person finds out they're probably a lot of mouth which is why they've been spewing all this garbage. That spreads like wildfire across the company. You yourself become ostracized, your classmates potentially turn against you because they've been looking up to this jock, whoever.” (Female)
  - “It's got to start from the bottom, people willing to step up and say ‘No, that's too far. You got to tone it down, you have to find another way to make your jokes to find things that are funny.’ It doesn't matter the top says things. As soon as one person at the top sets a bad example, it all goes downhill. It has to start with the bottom setting the standards and finding that the upper class setting the example where the line is.” (Female)
- Some midshipmen have sexist attitudes as part of their personality.
  - “If somebody has the pretense of saying like a sexist remark or has a sexist belief, my feeling on that is it probably comes from their background. It's just assault through denigration for lack of a better term.” (Male)
  - “We all come from different places. I didn't travel around when I was a kid so when I came here and met people from all over the country I was really remiss at first to think yeah, people really do have a different perspective than me. I thought we all believe the same thing, we're all in the military. It was shocking to me some of the things people believed that I didn't understand how people could think that way or where that perspective came from.” (Male)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to reward midshipmen who take a stand and call people out for inappropriate behaviors – but the Academy has to encourage those who are willing to try.
- ◆ Another opportunity might exist to establish a team or workshop of midshipmen willing to analyze this problem.

## **Relationship to Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- **Midshipmen indicated that sexist comments or sexual harassment might lead to USC.**
  - *"I think it's progressive like you said. It starts with a hand on the shoulder and if you don't say anything they're not going to stop doing that. You're not setting boundaries and they don't know where to stop. It progresses and you get you uncomfortable with all of everything. It gets to a point you don't want them around you at all. But you haven't set the boundary yet. It presents a problem."* (Female)
  - *"I would say that I believe sexual harassment would lead to unwanted sexual contact, but I think there's a large divide between sexist behavior and sexual harassment. I can see how sexual harassment would lead to unwanted contact, but I don't really see a large connection between sexist behavior and harassment. I think sexist behavior is widespread. I absolutely don't agree with it, but I think there's a line drawn between talking about 'Runs like a girl' or whatever, rather than soliciting sex from someone. It's a big difference."* (Male)
- **Midshipmen indicated that addressing sexual harassment might create an atmosphere of respect where USC would be less likely to occur.**
  - *"If people see that others are willing to step up and say 'Hey, don't use word that puts down women,' then they're much less likely to think they're going to get away with a worse thing, sexual harassment or rape or something along those lines. They already know people are willing to stand up for what they're saying, not even what they're doing."* (Female)
  - *"I think the SHAPE program has been trying to do that, they're trying to change the culture at the Naval Academy. I think if we change the culture then we'll be able to decrease the comments, the behaviors, then ultimately decrease the assaults."* (Male)
- **Other midshipmen indicated that reducing sexual harassment and sexist behavior might not have much impact on reducing USC.**
  - *"I feel like the sexist comments and the majority of sexual harassment is a culture issue, but when you get into the sexual assault, that's the few outliers. That's the*



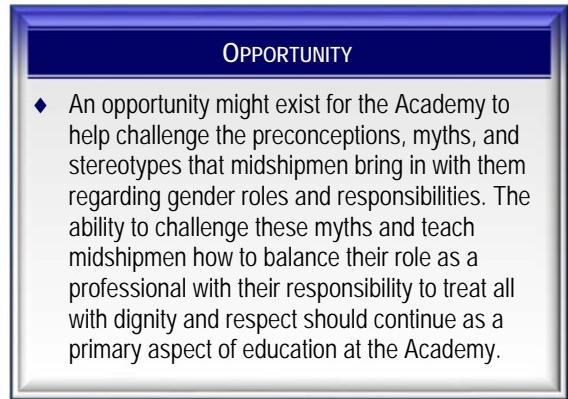
*individuals on their own that don't agree with the group. As a collective no one here is going to go sexually assault someone. It's people that have disregarded the rules and they have their own set of standards for behavior.” (Male)*

- “*I think it's just midshipmen in general, we understand that the sexual assault and unwanted sexual contact is bad. You're always going to have outliers that are for lack of better terms working their own agenda. So for those outliers maybe that might be the open door that they need, but for a majority of midshipmen it's not going to be like, ‘Oh, you let me say this, I'm going to come to your room and grope you at night.’* (Male)

### **Attitudes of Disrespect**

- **Midshipmen indicated that disrespect toward women is not a prevalent cultural norm at the Academy.**
  - “*Overall I don't think so. There are definitely the people who do disrespect women. In the overall scheme of things I don't think so.*” (Female)
  - “*I don't think disrespect is really here. I think there's a very small percentage of guys that probably disrespect women in general and don't think we belong here, but I don't think it's the culture here at all.*” (Female)
  - “*I might be a bit of a pessimist but females have been at the Academy for 30 years now. Some of the things I hear happened at the beginning or 10 years in when females were here, it seemed pretty bad. Granted, I think we're making good steps, it's not going to change overnight but I definitely think there's room for improvement. But you have to realize some of the things that have happened in the past don't happen anymore.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen felt that when sexist behavior and sexual assault do occur, it reflects an attitude of disrespect.**
  - “*It seems to be a matter of respect, especially as far as sexist behavior goes. A lot of it shows a disrespect for the opposite sex which then of course can lead to you not having a problem harassing them or feeling it's harassment, which of course then could lead to sexual contact. I think that you have to realize that sexist behavior is disrespectful in a sense, so to get to the grassroots level of it there has to be a cultural shift away from treating these people differently based on gender or assigning them certain roles based on gender. That will eliminate a lot of problems with people, expecting to get away with this kind of stuff because of the perceived rules of the opposite sex.*” (Male)
  - “*If you're going to assault someone you disrespect them automatically. You don't assault someone you respect, that doesn't make sense. I think it's inherent.*” (Female)

- **Midshipmen indicated cultural change drives role conflict.**
  - *I think just the change, you could see it in the 1960s, there's desegregation, just that change spurred tons of conflict. I think now that we are changing a lot of the Academy with like roles of women, there's a lot more women that go to the Academy. There's everything with the combat roles, just that change brings up a lot of conflict. I think the cultural, as generations are born into this change then it's going to get a lot better, lot smoother because they're not used to the old way.”* (Male)
- **Female midshipmen have a more difficult time proving themselves than male midshipmen.**
  - *The thing that I've experienced is if you're a competent woman the men don't have any problems with you. If you're failing the PRT and you're failing your classes you obviously can't keep up. They may attribute it to gender and may generalize it, they may say I don't want you here, which is a legitimate concern if you can't keep up whether you're a guy or girl. And I think the problem comes when they attribute it to gender and they can generalize it to all women, all people of that same gender.”* (Female)
  - *When you're a male respect is yours to lose. When you're a female you have to earn it every second of every day. And if you make one mistake you're done for, whereas with males it's a bad day for them. It's just a one-time thing. I feel like I have to overcome my gender to my professors, my peers, prove I am competent, whereas a male may not have to do the same thing. They only have to prove they are not incompetent.”* (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that the Physical Readiness Test (PRT) standards play a role in sexist attitudes for midshipmen.**
  - *I don't think we'll be able to eliminate all the sexist behavior. The PRTs grades and the scale is different, so I mean I don't think you can totally eliminate that until we're going to be exactly the same which you can't do.”* (Male)
  - *It's based on standards but some people might not perceive it that way or it might come off as not perceiving it that way. There are physiological differences, but I'm saying the fact the standards are different, I hear some people talk about it all the time, after PRT people are like, ‘Wow, so and so only did 50 pushups and they got a better score than I did.”* (Male).



- “*Around the PRT time people start talking about women standards being lower. And you just start degrading women just a little bit. Then it's easier once it's started to say something else.*” (Male)
  - “*I think a lot of politics that has come out more people talk about it and hear it and they start to question more tangible things here in the Academy like PRT scores and women doing pull-ups on the PRT rather than doing flexed-arm hang. The comparison between men and women become greater and the number goes up because people talk about it more.*” (Female)
  - “*Go back to fleet standards. Instead of raising the standards in general, making men run a 10:30, making them feel maybe more elite, or it sounds kind of ridiculous, maybe change the test to more of a three-mile, 24-minute run. That's a pretty good gauge of somebody's fitness as far as becoming a naval officer, being on a ship, a submarine. I'm not sure what the solution would be.*” (Female)
- **There is a perception among some male midshipmen that some decisions are based on quotas and that drives disrespect.**
  - “*There's always a rumor for billets and jobs within the brigade that a certain number are given for women. That drives a lot of, I don't want to say hatred but, 'Wow, just because they're a woman they're going to get a certain job in the brigade.' I know in our company a lot of people took it personal when every single woman who applied for plebe summer in our company got that billet when a lot of people who thought they deserved it didn't get it. That bred a lot of almost animosity. If they could dispel the rumors or say we have a certain number of slots for women and get rid of that or find a way that people are applying for certain jobs that we're not going to look whether you're a male or female, because I know that certainly irritates a lot of people. Because she's a woman and I have better grades and better PRT scores but she got the job because of that, it breeds a lot of this behavior.*” (Male)
  - “*It's not so much women don't belong at the Academy. I know a few mids who are cynical of a double standard almost, or their standards not being the same. Or that they're certain females that get away with certain things because of the fact they're female. They get positioned, they felt like they were better qualified for but our company is the only company with a female and she didn't even run for company commander. Somehow she got it when we had like eight other qualified mids who really wanted the position. They feel she was picked for that position solely for the fact she was a female.*” (Male)
- **Midshipmen indicated that the competitive nature of the Academy fosters some disrespect.**
  - “*The Academy is a very, very competitive place. [Denigrate somebody else makes you look more powerful?] Absolutely.*” (Male)

- **Midshipmen indicated that the Academy tends to separate men and women.**
  - “One thing, a big thing and you all touched on this is the classification, putting it all into separate boxes, girls do this and guys do this. Girls get this stuff from the Academy, guys get this stuff. If they separate us with briefs with activities that we do, there's still that kind of segregation even though the Academy is integrated. We need to reconsider, is this really something that needs to be separated because of the legitimate physiological difference, or are we doing this because that's the way it's always been done and we're more comfortable for us to do like that.” (Male)
  - “I just don't like classifying people, especially in [The Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) Center of Excellence] because there's no legitimate physiological difference why they would separate women in STEM, men in STEM versus people. It didn't make sense why they did that division at all.” (Male)
- **Midshipmen indicated that attitudes of disrespect at the Academy are often subtle.**
  - “I think there are definitely people here who think that girls don't belong at the Academy. I think it's not really seen as acceptable for them to say that. I've never had anyone say that outright, because I think that people wouldn't allow that. But I definitely think that it's more, it's a little more subtle than that.” (Female)
- **Some midshipmen indicated that female midshipmen are viewed as equals.**
  - “I was playing a sports game with some of the upperclassmen, I was the only female out there. We're all terrible at it so the whole time we were making fun of each other and having a really great time. It never really mattered, the fact I was the only girl. I've noticed it's that way a lot in company area too. The upperclassmen, like they don't divide off into these are the girls, these are the guys. They all hang out. I think that's really good.” (Female)

### **Midshipman Recommendations**

- **Increase awareness of the impact of sexist comments.**
  - “It's a mindset kind of thing. If people were more cognizant of what they were saying and thinking about the other person rather than themselves, rather than I think this is funny or I think this is accurate. Thinking how it would affect other people and being selfless in what they do.” (Male)
- **Recognize that attitudes need to change from within.**
  - “A lot of change comes from within. You can only go to so many briefs. I think a lot of it has to come from a natural perception about what's accepted in the community and what is not.” (Male)

- “*No one wants to be labeled as sexist or sexually harassing, but they don't think about it, it's not on their mind. A lot of the programs and things are drilling into people's minds that this is not okay. We're in the middle of the change. You have to keep doing that. It's shifting in the right direction.*”  
(Male)
- **Create change by empowering midshipmen to accept responsibility.**
  - “*After this last report they put all these watches and all these restrictions. And I think the Academy right now, let's put more restrictions, let's put more supervision. And I don't think that's the answer because it's making people angry and cynical about the situation.*”  
(Female)
  - “*Personally I just think the Academy would be better, would be better preparing midshipmen if it was more of a professional school where on the nights and on the weekends, that's your time, that's your personal time. We'll treat you like adults and that will give you more social skills. That will give you more respect for like the working environment and hopefully that you mature faster and better.*”  
(Female)
  - “*It sounds dumb but back to female empowerment. This is the world's biggest fraternity, it's all a big brotherhood. But I think we need a sorority within our fraternity. We need to find what we have in common with other females because we are limited initially by being put in the company with eight to 10 girls we don't know and you don't have that much in common with. And obviously make friendships throughout our time here, but who knows what friendships you're missing out on because someone lives on the other side of the Hall and you never meet them. We need to find out what we have in common so we can stick up for each other and encourage each other. Sometimes you do need the girl time to talk to another female because of, heaven knows, boys can't always give that to you. I don't know, I think we need to unify more.*”  
(Female)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ A core of committed midshipmen leaders can be highly effective in setting expectations and modeling desired behaviors.
- ◆ If midshipmen pick up sexist attitudes from each other, they can also pick up professional attitudes.
- ◆ A secondary outcome is that over time the midshipmen who continue with bad attitudes will begin to stand out against a background of enhanced professionalism and be targeted by fellow midshipmen with pressure to change or leave.

### **Reporting**

The purpose of this section was to gain additional understanding of why, even with all of the emphasis on USC and zero tolerance, midshipmen are still reluctant to report their experiences. Midshipmen offered a number of potential reasons, especially the perceived repercussions from reporting. The section ended with midshipmen providing recommendations to remove barriers to reporting.

## **Reasons for Not Reporting Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- **Midshipmen do not want to get the offender in trouble.**
  - “*I was going to say we keep emphasizing that it's usually somebody you know. And even if you are assaulted by somebody and they were your friend for the past three years you might not want to screw them over.*” (Male)
  - “*The biggest thing I've heard the reason why people don't report, and I have heard this from people who have been assaulted is they don't want them to get in trouble. They don't want their offender to get kicked out of the Navy, have their future ruined.*” (Female)
  - “*Part of it too, assuming the fact it's not a total stranger coming on to you, it's somebody you know, you are close with, you might even have a previous relationship with, they happen to push you far one time. Going to the chain of command you run the risk of sending them to jail. Even in the midshipmen conduct system, that's a huge – not only to them, it's someone you might care a lot about.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Midshipmen indicated that having a better understanding of what happens to an offender might help midshipmen make better decisions about reporting.**
  - “*I was going to say I think the hard part is there is no clear-cut line of what happens to someone when you report them. Whereas someone has an honor offense, they go into an honor board, they're going to get, depending on the severity of the offense, I think the hard part is no one really knows what happens. And I think the assumption is they're going to get kicked out. I think a lot of times things probably don't get reported because kind of what you were saying, I don't know if this is bad enough to get someone kicked out of the military.*” (Female)
  - “*We do a lot of XYZ cases for honor offenses. If we could do something similar with these so there's more transparency about what happens. We know the procedure about what happens when you report it, restricted versus unrestricted, who it goes up to, when NCIS gets involved. But when someone gets found guilty, then what happens.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated there are too many repercussions from reporting, such as lack of support from friend and peers, victim blaming, reliving the incident during the investigation, impact on academics, over-reaction, social isolation, and punishment for one's own actions.**

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Loyalty to ones' fellow midshipmen is understandable, but USC is a crime.</li><li>◆ An opportunity might exist to remind cadets that by not speaking up, the offender may perpetrate crimes against fellow midshipmen.</li></ul>

- “Even if you don't know the person that well, the fact is that chances are you are going to see him or her every day. I think for the victim they're trying to sweep it under, it never happened. Get on with their lives. Whereas if they have to report it they hash it out again and tell it to another person and another person. If they don't report it in their minds they can move on.” (Male)
- “Reporting changes the entire dynamic of whatever group it's in. When people got fried for frat it changed the dynamic in that we made fun of them a lot. They were both drunk and it was literally a kiss, and wasn't going to go any further but they got caught. We like to tease them about that.” (Female)
- “Also the victim is definitely embarrassed in reporting it, getting a person in trouble, maybe that person is well liked, and that person has friends and he tells a different story. And then people are against the victim. So maybe they decide not to report it because of that.” (Male)
- “I think if you report, a lot of times it has to deal with alcohol and occasionally it's underage alcohol so if you report something that happened they'll ask you what happened, where were you. And you have to admit you were drinking alcohol, which you'll probably get in trouble for doing that. So you're standing will go down, you'll get in trouble, that maybe defers people from reporting.” (Male)
- “Just the fact you live here and if you make a report where, then everyone finds out you've been raped and so and so has raped you, then there's a whole slew of problems socially that come with that.” (Female)
- “Because we have so many other responsibilities or things going on in our life they see it as too much to handle. They take up too much time and they don't want the reputation of it.” (Female)
- “Or it's embarrassing, they don't want to go through it again and disclose every detail.” (Female)
- “People, they don't always sympathize with you, some people will blame you.” (Female)
- “I know people have heard about the cases where the female mid or someone accused someone of rape, there was one two years ago maybe. And I heard it a

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist for the Academy to provide evidence that reporting may stop offenders from further crimes and may ensure victims are not revictimized. This might help midshipmen weigh the consequences they perceive to reporting, such as lack of support from friends and peers, victim blaming, reliving the incident during the investigation, impact on academics, over-reaction, social isolation, tarnished reputation, and punishment for one's own actions.

*lot of times myself where they were calling the girl a liar, that she was a whore to begin with, that she slept around, horrible things were said about this girl. I'd never known her, didn't know anything about her. Honestly, if I was ever in that situation I can honestly say I don't know if I would report it because I wouldn't want that to happen to me. That's just a big turn off, for females reporting it.*"  
(Mixed Gender Session)

- **To some midshipmen, “took care of it myself” might indicate the offender stopped when asked or confronted by others.**
  - *“Maybe they told the guy, ‘Stop, this isn’t acceptable’ and it stopped. Maybe it was a misunderstanding, the guy thought the girl was interested him, he kissed her and she’s no, not so much. It could be something like that.”* (Female)
  - *“Or if something happened further and you told someone about it. With the camaraderie here they would possibly take care of it. I know half the guys in my company, if I said a guy over in another company did something to me, they’d be all right, let’s go, let’s go.”* (Female)
- **To some midshipmen, “took care of it myself” might indicate the victim internalized the situation and did nothing.**
  - *“I’ve always imagined it as people ignoring it and pushing it to the side, like it happened and they just avoid the person.”* (Female)
  - *“What I would think if someone said I took care of it myself, I would see it as that just meaning you’re dealing with the effects on you yourself. You’re leaving the other person alone because you don’t think anything’s going to happen to them anyway. You need to just deal with it yourself.”* (Female)
  - *“It’s just such an awkward social subject that it’s not comfortable to talk about to anyone, even your best friend, if that’s your route of, way of reporting it. I don’t know what you can do about that. It’s uncomfortable.”* (Female)
  - *“It’s a huge sense of being judged. Midshipmen just try to impress. We are very competitive and you’re afraid by reporting this it’s a weakness that you have. People are afraid of what other people might say or think of them, even if you are reporting to somebody who wants to help you, sometimes you’re still afraid of what they might think.”* (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that protecting their reputation is important.**
  - *“Some of it might come from being labeled as someone who has been sexually assaulted. I think it makes people feel sympathetic but at the same time it’s distancing you from people. That separation is still negative, even though people feel sympathetic to you, that’s why I think it’s hard for people to report.”* (Male)

- “*Honestly I don't think there's anything you can do. Because like it was said, there are 4,000 of us. Regardless of how big it seems at times, if you move companies somebody in your old company is going to know somebody in the new company and people will know about something that happened. Your social standings, there's not much you can do about that. Because order of merit is such big deal, it affects the rest of your life and your career choice.*” (Male)
- **Some midshipmen would report USC if there was a known threat, but not otherwise.**
  - “*General touching and stuff I would say people probably wouldn't report and they would keep it to themselves. Probably more serious things like, I know we've had some instance where there's been like a groper that's gone into people's rooms and they don't know who it is and touching girls and waking them up. It hasn't happened in a while. But people were freaked out about that. That's something that's really serious, they don't know what's going on. They have because it's happened and sent out an email and all the watch standards would know. [People keeping an eye out for that?] Right.*” (Male)
- **Midshipmen are less inclined to report unwanted sexual touching than other behaviors.**
  - “*I think there's a perception that unwanted touching, you apply the reasonable person standard and there's room for doubt. Somebody touches you, you say 'Oh, well, no one else seems to be upset by this, I'm sure this has happened before, I'm being oversensitive, I need to move on and go back to what I'm doing, not worry about it. That's not a big deal.'*” (Male)
- **Midshipmen indicated that it is possible a midshipman might make a false report to stay out of trouble.**
  - “*I would think that would be a potential reason considering the consequences for sex in the Hall, alcohol offenses, those two together, you're out.*” (Male)
- **Midshipmen might not see the value in making a report.**
  - “*I think people are probably pretty cynical about getting any real results. I feel like most people think if you report something like that, then there's a very small chance anything's going to happen about it to that person. So I feel if you were in that situation why put yourself through that and why put yourself through facing everyone knowing that happened to you if that person isn't going to be kicked out, isn't going to have any conduct action, isn't going to be prosecuted.*” (Female)



- **Midshipmen are less inclined to report a same-gender offender.**
  - “*I think a male would be definitely less likely.*” (Female)
  - “*I was talking to two guys I know. They said there was an upperclassman guy who had made advances on both of them. And I know that neither of them reported it, and I think as a guy they probably don't want people to think that they're gay or they don't want them to see them differently, so they didn't do anything about it.*” (Female)
  - “*They don't want to see themselves weak.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen deal with difficult situations differently.**
  - “*It's totally dependent of the person of what they report. I know some people will see a light touch as sexual harassment whereas other people don't, wouldn't even think twice about it. I think it's totally dependent on the person. I think it's hard to come up with a number based on that.*” (Female)
- **There are resources available, but some midshipmen are still reluctant to discuss such personal matters.**
  - “*I think they've done a really good job saying this is what restricted reporting this, this is unrestricted reporting. These are the people you can talk to, but it's still not very accessible especially to underclassmen who are who more scared than we are because we're all firstees.*” (Female)

### ***Midshipman Recommendations***

- **Increase visibility of SAR Guides.**
  - “*We have SAR guides, Sexual Assault Response guides, and at least in my company, the one in our company talked to us for 10 minutes in the wardroom at the beginning of the year. ‘Hey, did anything happen?’ Showing their faces more in their billet, like ‘Hey, I am the SAR guide, anything happens.’ I don't know how they do it, maybe it's informal, everything good, come to me because that would really help if there's a midshipman that's confidential that you can trust and say I just want to talk to somebody, I don't want to say who did it, all that stuff. A lot of people don't even know who the SAR guide is in the company or which ones there are. I feel if that was more visible it would be more a viable option.*” (Male)
- **Allow midshipmen to talk to coaches and other trusted staff.**
  - “*I think coaches are a big part of a lot of people's lives if you're an athlete [Yes, it would be good to be able to talk to them with some degree of anonymity].*” (Male)

## ***Perceptions of Leadership***

Another major area for investigation in the 2013 SAGR focus groups centered on perceptions of leadership with respect to being engaged in preventing USC. The presumption is that programmatic aspects of sexual assault prevention and response are in place but require continual emphasis. Leadership at all levels is necessary to make programs maximally effective. Midshipmen were asked about the degree to which they interact with leadership on these issues, whether leaders react appropriately and lead by example, and what else leaders can do to help diminish USC.

### ***Interactions with Leadership on Gender-Related Topics***

- **Midshipmen indicated that leadership clearly takes gender-related issues seriously.**
  - “*Last semester we had, all the brigade went into the Alumni Hall. I think the Chief of Naval Operations and Secretary of the Navy came and talked to us about some of these numbers.*” (Male)
  - “*I know in our company the way our company officer and our senior enlisted are really on board with respect and promoting a good working environment. And if there are any issues, addressing them and making sure that people are taken care of. We had issues this year that I think were minimized because of just involvement, mentorship, and correction. So we knew they were really invested, they weren't doing this because they were told to do it, so because they went about it on a personal level and a one-on-one level I think it was respected.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen would not expect to interact with faculty on gender-related issues.**
  - “*The trouble with some of the faculty, the relationship with teachers is such a professional thing and this is a personal matter. And I just, I personally wouldn't go to a professor and be like, ‘Sir, there was an assault in the Hall.’ I don't think he would expect you to. I could be wrong with that, but when you're going to class and talking to a professor it's different than company officer even or SEL or one of your fellow midshipmen who you live, work and play with. It's different when you see him an hour a day and learn something from, I personally wouldn't go to him first.*” (Male)
  - “*As far as teachers, it's kind of separate from our lives in the Hall. And they don't necessarily, especially the civilian faculty, they don't understand the dynamics, I feel like I'd be more likely to go to like either another midshipmen in my company or my senior enlisted leader or company officer or chaplain. They're more involved in that aspect.*” (Female)

#### **OPPORTUNITY**

- ♦ An opportunity might exist to host a midshipmen/faculty forum to explore ways to engage faculty members as a resource if someone wants to reach out.

- “*I wouldn't go to a civilian. I feel like with the civilian professors they either really believe in the whole Academy or I'm here because it's a job and I don't really care.*” (Female)
  - “*I feel like they would take the issue seriously, but there's something like being in class every day with the person you just spilled your heart out to and having to look at them. And it just, that relationship would just never be the same.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that some coaches are approachable.**
  - “*I'm really close with my coach. We have a really close relationship. It's just almost like a sponsor parent. A sponsor parent basically. I would definitely go to coach if I had any problems or anything. Staff and faculty don't spend that much time with midshipmen in general unless they're coaches, then you see them every day.*” (Male)
- **Some company leaders discuss issues with midshipmen, some do not.**
  - “*In my company my SEL is one of the victims' advocates and talks to us about it a lot actually. But our company officer, I don't think has ever brought it up. But I think the majority of company is still uncomfortable talking about it.*” (Female)
- **Most midshipmen interactions with senior leaders are at the group level.**
  - “*As far as I know it's been just in the SHAPE sessions. I've never really talked about it in company area except like right after reform our company officer had meetings with each class, but that was mostly because I think they had to. But most of them feel like it gets addressed enough in the SHAPE sessions. So they don't really bring it up in company.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that senior leaders communicate the importance of preventing USC, but they do not relate well to midshipmen.**
  - “*When you bring people like that in, it might bring an added weight and an added importance. But it's very impersonal, we don't interact with those people ever. It felt like a scolding. It felt like a scolding and there's also the fact like how can we listen to you about this when you're not ever here.*” (Female)
  - “*It was really ineffective. Part of it is if it hasn't happened to you and you haven't done it to anyone else and you haven't witnessed it, you're not going to listen to it. It's like this doesn't apply to me.*” (Female)
  - “*We had like the CNO and Sec Nav, I don't know who went first and who went second, but whoever went first I really liked theirs because they were talking more about 'Hey, guys, come together, protect your shipmates.' The second one was, 'You guys are horrible leaders, think about what this implication has on your enlisted in the fleet. They're reading all this stuff about this in Navy Times. They*

*know you guys have done really bad and shame on you.’ Well, great, that one came second so that’s what everyone’s left with.”* (Male)

- “*I felt they came in, scolded and left. I felt like this is unacceptable, this shouldn’t be happening, and then they left. They didn’t have any suggestions on how we should help fix, I felt we were just scolded.*” (Male)
  - “*I felt like I was in trouble and I’ve never sexually assaulted a women. So I was being scolded like a little child for something I’ve never done and hopefully 99, 100 percent of my class-mates have never done. I didn’t think it was very effective. They came here to cover their butts because the media is like, ‘Oh, this happened, what did you do about it?’ I went there, I had all these watches, I scolded them so my hands are clean.*” (Male)
  - “*That was a complete, I think disaster. If they would have come out and said going more on the brother and sister, like these are your brothers and sisters in arms, why would you want to do something like that to a friend or something like that. And not come off as accusatory, that would have been way more effective.*” (Female)
  - “*I’ve never felt unsafe in Bancroft, ever. But coming back after that brief my roommate wasn’t here yet, she had two or three extra days leave, it was the first time I ever considered locking my door at the Academy.*” (Female)
  - “*I really did hear them say these are shipmates and you know these people. And you know, why was nobody close enough to the girl who got raped to talk to her and to have her feel open enough to come and speak to you whenever bad things started happening to her and prevent this or help her deal with it whenever it did happen. And why was nobody either close to the guy or watching the guy that raped her and was able to realize this was a possible troublemaker and we need to keep our eyes on him and either stop it or guide him in a new direction? I think that the gravity they put on it was a bit shocking because we’re not used to being addressed that way. When we have speakers come in they say, you’re the future of America and it’s awesome. They don’t say, why are your statistics on sexual harassment so high. And that hurts. But it’s our record, we earned it, so I don’t know, devil’s advocate I guess.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen felt that serious discussions of sexual assault are more appropriate for leaders at the company level or lower.**
    - “*More personal stuff like this needs to be handled at the smaller level. Your squad leader knows a heck of a lot more about you than the CNO does. It’s not going to help to bring in the four stars. But your squad leader is someone you see every day, you eat meals with them, they do counseling every six weeks. The squad leader or company commander is a better person in the situation.*” (Female)

- “I think small groups would be great. But I don't think it should be whole companies, not even in your class whole companies. I think it needs to be smaller because it's easier to change, to isolate a small group of people and change their mind or change their views on something then to get the entire company where half the people aren't even listening and try to get them to be more vigilant.”  
(Female)
- **Midshipmen feel some leaders are not approachable.**
  - “Maybe civilian people. I can't see midshipmen going up to officers and trying to talk to them about that. That's all that's around. Otherwise you go to your upperclassmen, those are the guys making jokes.” (Male)
- **Midshipmen perceive some leaders as inflexible.**
  - “There was an incident that occurred where some of my classmates saved a fellow midshipman who passed out at a concert, but they themselves were drinking underage. Even though they did the right thing they got a major conduct offense for doing that. So there was a lot of cynicism bred around it, like why should I even save something if I'm going to be maxed out and get in trouble. Had they walked away like nothing would have happened. Yes, they were doing the wrong thing but maybe they shouldn't have gotten a major offense for that. They could have got a minor and not been as bad.” (Male)
  - “I think it's up to the leadership to recognize you made a mistake, but you did the right thing and have them take it under their control instead of pushing it through the brigade conduct system, that an officer can recognize you did the right thing, he should be able to cut you some slack.” (Male)
- **Midshipmen want to feel comfortable discussing issues up their chain of command.**
  - “I don't know if there's any way to change that but I feel like you should be able to do a restricted report or no report at all or informal counseling. And ask them for advice. Nobody knows better than somebody in the chain of command whether or not you should put something in the chain of command. If there would be any way to change that aspect of it.” (Male)
- **Midshipmen indicated that there are other resources available.**
  - “We have the Midshipmen Development Center. I don't know if they have people we can talk to. But I know we can talk to the chaplain, there's one per battalion you can go talk to.” (Male)

### ***Leading by Example***

- **Midshipmen indicated that leadership sets a good example.**

- “*I feel like any of the professors in my whole department, or the primary ones are role models for me. I've had classes with most of them. I would go talk to them about anything.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen noted that there are some instances where leaders make inappropriate comments.**
  - “*I'm not trying to make any accusations but I have had teachers and other officers and stuff who said things that aren't necessarily appropriate. So on the whole as a majority I would say they all try and not let it happen, encourage an environment where it doesn't happen but there are always some.*” (Female)
  - “*One of the training sergeants last year got relieved of his position because of a comment he made. He came back drunk, he made a comment a bunch of people heard and he was training us for more than half the semester. I wasn't surprised he made the comment. I don't think many people were. But I think the upper class were surprised he was relieved.*” (Female)
  - “*There is one professor that I've had that created a really bad environment in class, and whoever was talking about that, civilian professors, I'm not sure if they get any training or censored at all or anything. There's one that I have in mind that was a really bad example for a lot of the midshipmen in the class, and actually promoted a more disrespectful environment.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that fraternization is handled differently in different companies.**
  - “*The leadership determines the culture, especially in regard to this. I know a few people who have been involved with conduct cases for frat with people, out of company people that brought them into it. Our company leadership hasn't taken it that seriously and has sided with them.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that changing the culture starts with leadership.**
  - “*I would say company officer. I think he decides or she decides how the company is run for the most part.*” (Male)
  - “*I think it's culture because the only leadership that comes here is from the Naval Academy. It's the same way it has been since they've been here. You don't bring in leadership from any outside ROTC or people who attended regular universities, maybe it's a wild idea but maybe also have a civilian counterpart as far as leadership goes because it's an academic institution. If you didn't bring*

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to engage faculty and to impress on them their role in helping drive change toward a more respectful and professional culture.

*that up it's thrown out the window because of the tradition it's how the Naval Academy always has been. And all the leaders are from the Naval Academy. They don't want to be the ones to change the tradition. It's how it's always been.”* (Male)

## **Training**

Training in sexual assault prevention and response is a recurring topic for surveys and focus groups. The facilitator started by asking midshipmen to describe the training they receive on these topics, how they perceive their training in reducing USC, and to give examples of the most effective training they have experienced. The section on training concluded with a discussion of recommendations for improvement.

### **Training Received**

- **Midshipmen indicated that much of the training is repetitive.**
  - “*We can only go to so many briefs. There has to be a certain medium between so many hours of effective teaching before you cross that line into the receiver is just has to go. If you're forced to go to something like eight times over a semester, a lot of people get, I don't want to say demotivated but they're not going to participate. There's like, ‘Oh, great, just another thing I have to sit through.’ You're not going to hear the message or participate in creating the message even if you have to do it so often.”* (Male)
  - “*I think the more we have those briefs and everything, there's just more of a response to it that's not taking it seriously that makes light of the situation.”* (Female)
  - “*Everyone gets really irritated with it. We had like three people come talk to us the first day we got back from winter break, on the same day. We were all, ‘Oh, my gosh, make it stop.’”* (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that training has helped in some companies.**
  - “*I think it also depends on the company. I'm associated with SHAPE and teaching classes, SHAPE, Sexual Harassment Assault Prevention Education. People argue if we are effective at all making some kind of a change. From viewing different companies and classes you can tell there are some companies where you had the lesson and it's super easy to teach because everyone's on board. I love my company, I thought we were good. I never heard the word DUB until I started interacting or teaching. I never heard of a case of someone actually using that word until I was teaching SHAPE classes, until my youngster year. From my perspective I think things are getting better. I don't know how things are going in other companies.”* (Mixed Gender Session)

- **Midshipmen indicated that some training is not very realistic.**
  - “As far as it being practical that's a big thing. A lot of these briefs, some guy we don't really know saying, ‘Oh, the girls around you, they don't want to hear this.’ And there's a big separation, the guys go to one room, the girls go to another room. I think it would be helpful if we heard the other gender's personal opinions like, ‘I don't like it when people say this.’ And you just don't hear that in any briefs. It's some guy telling you no one around you wants to hear this.” (Male)
- **Midshipmen indicated that the best training relates to life as a midshipman.**
  - “I think most effective training was when they had specific examples for us. Instead of writing on the board don't say sexist things to people, that doesn't help. But if they say an example and you think to yourself, “Oh, crap, I've done that before.’ That trigger might go off in your head, ‘Oh, wait, we were just talking about this.’ You might not associate sexual harassment with the actual behaviors that people might be doing. So really specific examples and real, practical advice. Everybody knows it's bad. That's been drilled. We don't need to be told, don't sexually harass people, don't be sexist, don't assault people.” (Male)
  - “That's a big thing I was going to talk about is discussion. A lot of these training things we go to is some officer standing there talking at us reading from a script saying this, this, and this is wrong, don't do this. And there's very little opportunity for questions or discussion or realistic application, which I think would be a lot better if we were able to bring up situations and discuss with each other 'Okay, how can we stop this, what are we doing wrong?' To be able to look at our own behavior and discuss with each other.” (Male)
  - “If you don't have a personal connection to it, it's really easy to write it off.” (Female)
  - “For the last SHAPE session that I was talking about, when the female Marine Corps captain walks in the room, it's like put your cell phones away. She was a female Marine Corps captain. When she talked about her story suddenly she was like one of us and we could relate to her. And it was really great because she talked about how she dealt with the situation. I think that was just awesome because it was something we could relate to and something we'll actually see when we graduate. And we're supposed to be building leaders here. Half the time we are dealing with situations so narrowly focused on what we see here, but we don't talk about what happens in the fleet a lot, especially with this issue.” (Female)

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to collaborate with the other Academies to identify ideas and best practices for making sexual assault training more relevant to life as midshipmen.

- “At last the SHAPE session I had an officer, a Coast Guard officer. She was helpful because she's been on Navy ships. She's able to tell us when her mentor started going on ships it was when females were first allowed to. She's able to tell us how the culture has changed, how you can help the change progress further into it is okay for women to be on ships, so real world applications are definitely helpful.” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that personal development and mentorship might help with social awkwardness for midshipmen.**
  - “The benefit to mentoring programs for the individual, like character development and with that leadership and officer growth, to have female mids be mentored by a female officer and the males mentored by a male officer. You need outside wisdom there to and work on that. Work on the individual without other mids' influence, you need that mentorship. I think that would make a big difference to put some personal development and what it means to be here in the military vice than in a regular college where this is really typical behavior.” (Female)
  - “I think that the mentorship could be really effective for empowering the individual and getting you to mature more quickly than just your own experience going through, to realize this is about your development and your officership in a few years, so let's get working on your personal development.” (Female)
  - “My company, at the beginning of every year we used to, all the female upperclassman get the plebe underclass together and talk about what they might experience or encounter, and how to handle it so they wouldn't be caught off guard, they wouldn't make the same mistakes we did. This year we were told by the company officer if we were going to continue doing that we had to make it open to the guys as well. So then we didn't actually do it this year because it wouldn't have the same effect.” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that being able to share opinions and thoughts is more effective than receiving information one way.**
  - “I think things that make you be involved and you want to participate, you can say your opinion and listen to other people's opinions, I think that's way more effective. No one know really knows what everyone else is thinking, to be honest no one is really thinking anything in a room with 4,000 people.” (Female)
  - “Maybe make it more open discussions, more talking within the brigade.” (Male)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist to enhance current trainings with more opportunities for midshipmen to become engaged by having the opportunity to question or debate a topic.</li> </ul>

- **Midshipmen indicated that smaller training sessions foster more discussion.**
  - “*I definitely think the smaller groups are better. In a classroom full of people no one wants to talk about it. My makeup session was two plebes, two second class and an officer doing training. We talked a lot. I felt it was a lot more informative. I know it's impractical to do a lot of small groups because there are so many of us, but I think that makes a big effect on how we view the SHAPE session.*” (Female)
  - “*We had one SHAPE session, it was only with females. And that was the most participation from the females because I think in the ones where it was like our whole company class and it was males and females, it was more of the males that participated because a lot of females didn't want to speak up and didn't want to be the ones to talk about it and seem sensitive about it. And I think that when it was in the groups with just females we were more likely to actually talk about it.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen are sometimes reluctant to share their thoughts on sensitive topics in front of their peers.**
  - “*If it's a SHAPE or SAR meeting or whatever, people don't want to say anything. Here [in the focus group] we are relatively anonymous. If you're with your company mates you don't want to say anything. And if you're in the setting with the SHAPE educator it's confined there, slap a smile on it, good job. You go back to the Hall, it's like ‘Did you hear what they were saying?’ And so it's more like, you have any questions, nope, any comments, nope.*” (Female)
  - “*I think the difficulty is that a lot of people, be it men or women, feel uncomfortable giving their true thoughts on the matter in front of the other gender. But I think if you were to ask women in a women's group, ‘Do you wish the men knew how you felt about all of this?’ Pretty much we would say ‘Yes.’ I don't know how we bridge that gap, we have these opinions but we're not comfortable saying it in front of them, but we still want them to know.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that training led by an officer or senior enlisted leader might add authority to the message.**
  - “*A lot of trainings are run by midshipmen, and that's a good thing. But I almost wonder if we should have a higher up observer or somebody in there holding people accountable.*” (Female)
  - “*I think the most effective SHAPE session was the one led by an officer or an SEL. It added that more serious tone to it. And not that we think officers walk on*



*water but it did add a little more legitimacy to the statement and took away any thoughts of hypocrisy. Sometimes it's hard having another midshipman telling you something when I know you were making jokes about this yesterday. Now you're telling us don't make those jokes, guys. Having an officer do it because we don't have the same personal interactions with an officer, I think gave that SHAPE setting some more legitimacy.”* (Female)

- **However, having an officer or senior enlisted leader lead training might stifle discussion.**
  - “*The last SHAPE session there was an officer and it does make everyone at least pretend to pay attention. Everyone's more respectful. It gets people focused, making sure people aren't making jokes. You're also not going to get real answers all the time. People aren't going to want to speak their mind because there's an officer sitting there. Like a double edged sword.*” (Female)
  - “*One of the last SHAPE sessions we had there was a female Marine officer in the room. She was great, she had her own story to share. And her sharing her own story prompted us to really get involved. It was just all females session. It was jammed packed in the room, there was like 60 people in a conference room this size. But we were all really involved in the conversation. But this other time it was a mixed session of guys and girls and just my company. And there's a gunnery sergeant in there. And nobody said anything because we were all afraid, even when the first class asked us for inappropriate things we heard about the yard. Nobody wanted to say anything because we didn't want to say anything inappropriate in front of a gunnery sergeant.*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen received SAPR-L and SAPR-F training.**
  - “*That was the video. I didn't think that was as helpful as the SHAPE training. SHAPE trainings were more discussion oriented. This was one-sided, watch this video, leave in an hour. Was a thing to get done. The SHAPE training was more valuable discussion with examples and interaction.*” (Male)
  - “*I thought the video that they showed us, I can't remember which one it was, I think that one, I thought it was effective for me at least. It brought to light things I may have not thought about.*” (Male)
  - “*It would have been better had it not been two hours long. They dragged it out way longer than it needed to be. You lose focus where if it were a 20-minute video and 15 minutes of discussion afterwards it would drive the point home a lot more than sitting there and just reading question after question after question, basically repeating the same answers and dragging this out.*” (Male)
  - “*I thought it was good. They definitely pointed out and you noticed what the officer and the chief in the video did wrong. You went ‘Oh, I would like to think I*

*did this in the situation and that would have quelled it.' The officer and the chief in that video didn't really do anything." (Male)*

- **Midshipmen indicated that mixed gender training sessions would be helpful.**
  - *"Part of our SHAPE trainings are divided between guys and girls. If we push it to everyone being the same, allow us in the same room to get the same training. [Interaction and discussion would be helpful?] Yes." (Male)*
  - *"I think it was youngster year they did women and men. I think they did a thing like this, it was an open forum, you could talk about different things." (Female)*
- **Midshipmen indicated that training for women might have a different focus than for men.**
  - *"I think it's a different type of knowledge they both need to hear. As like minorities among the boys, the different lifestyle, there are different things you'll get faced with. A male would have a different experience than I would have because men and women are very different. Something else that people don't really understand is how different we all think and behave naturally. The psychology of men and women is in itself completely different. There's misinterpretation because you don't understand how each other think or what's okay with someone of your own sex is not the same with someone else. It's just set up for failure, so education." (Female)*
  - *"Making women aware that it does matter what your actions are. There is a time for to you maybe leave, even though it shouldn't be that way, just raising some awareness, and some self-respect too. To minimize risk is a good way to put it." (Female)*
- **Midshipmen indicated that self-defense training might help midshipmen defend themselves against sexual assault.**
  - *"Maybe this is crazy but we have to take three semesters of martial arts here. There are all these very technical moves and arm bars and very impressive, very good for the future female marines. But I think honestly we should learn more self-defense techniques. I know most sexual assaults are perpetrated by people you know. But for those random alley attacks if we could learn how to use a Taser, mace, or eye gouge, or something a little more practical than putting somebody in this complicated arm lock I don't remember a year later does me no good for defending myself." (Female)*
  - *"Something too this semester or this month with the sexual harassment awareness they proposed doing self-defense classes for people who were interested. I don't know if it officially got approved but last I checked it was looking they were going to have them this month. I do think that's probably empowering the individual when no one's around you can be able to protect yourself both physically and*

*psychologically understanding of awareness. Getting people who want to take them to actually be prepared, offering that resource.”* (Female)

- “*To make the martial arts classes more effective, the material what you're teaching for the women especially is important. If we could get a female instructor in there then I think the females would take it more on board. And because a lot of time the male instructors somewhat dismiss the females. They try to help them and everything but there's always a very different dynamic between the female midshipmen in the class who are like, I have to get through this, some of them, and the guys are showing me this is stuff that I've grown up doing, I can handle this. If we could get female instructors I think they might be helpful.*” (Female)

### ***Additional Midshipman Recommendations***

The final major area of discussion in the 2013 SAGR focus groups was titled “Additional recommendations for addressing USC and sexual harassment.” The purpose was to spend a few minutes reflecting on the general discussion of factors influencing USC at the Academy and to drive out any other good ideas from the midshipmen on ways to reduce it. To start the conversation, midshipmen were asked how well prepared they felt for dealing with gender-related issues when they have subordinates. The facilitator also asked if a Dignity and Respect Code, similar to the Honor Concept, might be helpful in creating a culture of zero tolerance. The facilitator ended the focus groups by asking midshipmen for their final thoughts on issues and if there were any questions that were not asked but should have been.

### ***Preparation for the Future***

- ***Some midshipmen felt prepared for the future.***
  - “*I would say yes to that. You've got to take care of your people. And men, women, I'll look out for them. I just don't want a war on men to occur. Saying all you guys are rapists, I've heard some of those comments and stuff. I wish everyone would take care of everyone if we lived in a perfect world, but unfortunately we don't. So I feel prepared. If the Academy could change one thing I wish we could all mature as we go through here. Since we're all in a close environment, if you change this you might lose some military aspect of it, if you give people more freedom, but there's a cost benefit analysis you could do if you really had a lot of time of getting people mature by giving them more responsibility and freedoms or making it harder. It's a tradeoff. Do you want someone to mature more or do you want to make it really strict and military like? So I feel I'm prepared for that, if someone needs help I can come to them and get the job done.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*What I'm taking from here, you're one team, respect one another. And come down just as hard on people for making fun of each other for fitness as you are for people who are harassing each other for sexual harassment or sexist remarks, having it across the board. Having the leadership stopping everything that*

*happens, not just ‘Hey, boys, stop beating young girls.’ I think that fuels the problem.”* (Mixed Gender Session)

- “*I've definitely learned a lot. I feel like it might be a little drilled into us maybe too much, but I think it's definitely valuable information, stuff I'm going to be using in the fleet. I think I'm well prepared. I think we can all say that, we are well prepared to handle a situation. It's hard and we'll be confused and conflicted about what to do. But I feel it's something we'll have the resources to handle because of what we've learned here.*” (Mixed Gender Session)

### **Dignity and Respect Code**

- Some midshipmen indicated that creating a Dignity and Respect Code might be helpful in fostering a culture of respect.
  - “*I feel like it would be beneficial because a lot of times here people get so caught up with academics and the competitive nature that people aren't treated with respect. And just even the minor little things, like not saying hi to someone who says hi to you back, that's a minor thing – a common courtesy that a lot of people here don't have. Just a reminder of having the common decency that we are going to need as officers.*” (Male)
  - “*I think that maybe it would be a good idea to add it to something, to get it out there to make people more aware of it.*” (Male)
- Other midshipmen indicated that another code of conduct is unnecessary.
  - “*I doubt having something you sign would have any real effect. As far as the honor concept we agree with it but it's not like something we wake up in the morning, ‘Okay, I believe in honor.’ So if we were to sign something....*” (Male)
  - “*I see them as more like an internal thing, either you have them or you don't and you're just signing a piece of paper. If you already have them you're just signing a piece of paper.*” (Male)
  - “*I think people would see that as a joke. The honor concept is there, people don't even like that one. That's one about cheating and stealing. If this one happened people would be like, ‘Oh, we don't need that to deal with it. We can deal with it on our own.’*” (Female)
  - “*If there was another honor concept everyone would see it as an annoyance.*” (Female)
- Another code of conduct might have opposite impact.
  - “*I feel also it would almost like cheapen it, like the principles of respect and dignity that would be already held to you because I feel like people would see it if*

*you have to tell people to respect each other's dignity, then it just cheapens the whole concept of it. You shouldn't have to be told that.”* (Female)

- “*Like a kindergarten teacher, ‘Stop teasing Jimmy, stop it.’ Obviously a lot of these statistics, a lot of us aren’t mature enough. But telling us to be more mature is not going to make us more mature. It really has to be midshipmen.*” (Female)
- “*I feel like it might isolate some people more. It would be like, ‘Oh, we have this because of you.’*” (Female)
- **Midshipmen indicated that shared standards and accountability to the company are more effective than codes of conduct.**
  - “*Everything has to do with accountability here, like us and our company officers and direct leaders are the ones who basically handle who is held accountable for what. It’s one thing if the Commandant says that frat is bad and it can’t happen. But he’s not the one going around and policing it. It’s your fellow midshipmen and your company officer and the people you interact with. And basically whatever they all decide is okay is what they’re going to enforce. So if something isn’t really seen as serious or a big deal then no one is going to enforce it.*” (Female)
  - “*I think the environment of what you’re in and how you feel around each other and what standards you hold is more effective.*” (Female)
  - “*I think that’s the issue is that nobody wants to come forward and be like ‘This isn’t okay.’ Because you don’t want to be that one person that takes everything seriously. And it’s almost like you lose respect if you stand up for something that everyone is so openly against. If someone stood up and was like ‘Hey, guys, we need to take the rover watches seriously, they’re really important. We could prevent some drunken person from walking into our upperclassmen’s room and trying to assault them.’ But most the time it’s really difficult to stand up against your peers. And there’s this big fear of backlash. But I think really the only way to get a lot of this change for us to take it seriously is to step up. And that’s not easy.*” (Female)

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ♦ An opportunity might exist to more publicly recognize those midshipmen who have the strength of character to step up to issues – they will emerge as role models for shaping cultural change.

## **Final Thoughts**

- **Midshipmen watching out for each other is the most effective way to prevent sexual assault.**
  - *"I know when I've seen a friend he was about to go over the line, I'm like, 'Hey, you're going over the line.' Or you see one of your female classmates and some other midshipman or some other person you say 'Hey, watch out for him.' There definitely is watching out for each other and making sure you don't hurt your friends. I think that's the best way forward."* (Male)
- **Midshipmen would like to be part of the process to address USC.**
  - *"I really like what you said – empowering midshipmen and I'd really love for that to happen. Push some of the officers in the chain of command into reassessing the way that they empower adult midshipmen at the Academy in the future. I would really stress that. [Involved versus being the recipient?] Yes, absolutely."* (Male)
  - *"The brigade of midshipmen is just as upset and wanting change as there is from this survey as the officers are. We want to be treated as people that can help."* (Male)
  - *"Advice is never solicited. They don't ask for us, they just tell us."* (Male)



## **Chapter 5: U.S. Naval Academy Faculty and Staff**

Three focus group sessions were conducted at USNA from April 8-11, 2013. Each session was scheduled for a 90-minute period. The three sessions were: faculty members, coaches and athletic staff, and military staff (Company Officers, Senior Enlisted Advisors). Each session had between four and ten participants.

### ***Sexual Assault***

The 2013 SAGR focus groups were the first time sessions were held with anyone other than midshipmen. Because faculty and staff interact with midshipmen daily, the rationale was to present to them many of the same questions posed to the midshipmen participants to gain a different perspective on issues. The same approach was taken where in each topical area the facilitator made an effort to drive out causes for behaviors or situations being discussed and recommendations for improvement.

The discussions began by sharing with the participants the unwanted sexual contact (USC) rates from the 2012 SAGR and asking whether they had seen those results. Participants were asked to discuss why the rates have increased across the past four survey years. Additional questions were posed for their knowledge of where incidents were most likely to occur, their thoughts on victims experiencing multiple incidents of USC over time, and the role of “sexting” and pornography. Participants further contributed comments on the role alcohol plays in USC, when during the day it is more likely to occur, and whether “victim blaming” occurs.

### ***Familiarity with Incidence Rates from 2012 SAGR***

- **Faculty and staff indicated that the USC incidence rates were shocking.**
  - *“I'd heard of this rate before but when I hear the rate I'm pretty mortified. I have unfortunately heard that number before when the survey came out.”* (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that gender issues go in cycles.**
  - *“I don't see things in my classroom, they're not dumb. It's a question of how close I am to the pulse of women through various programs that I may or may not do. There was a real concern in '00, '01 and I believe the Academy in fact fended off anything like the Air Force problems of two to three years later by its intervention. So I have this feeling, there's a pulse in the brigade. And they'll be attention and things will get better and then everybody will think everything's just fine and go on, then there will be another pulse.”* (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that the ratio of staff to midshipmen might account for the difference in sexual assault incident rates between Academies and active duty.**
  - *“Has anybody brought up the issue at the academies the number of grown-ups per vulnerable age, that that differential in the fleet, there are a lot more grown-ups. They have a fewer number of people to keep track of. Here there's one*

*company officer for, what is it, 140, and they go home at night. ‘Lord of the Flies, by gender.’”* (Faculty)

- “*I think that's key. The Academy at least in my very limited anecdotal experience, during the daytime the adults are here and the teachers are here, the faculty and senior enlisted and company officers are here, most midshipmen are not in the room. They're at school or practice or whatever. Then there's the great exchange. All the adults leave and all the midshipmen come and occupy the hallway.*” (Faculty)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to increase the accountability among midshipmen themselves for maintaining a professional environment, even after hours when the faculty and staff are no longer present.
- ◆ Another opportunity might exist to increase the presence of company officers and SELs to help reinforce the commitment to a more professional environment.

- **Faculty and staff indicated that midshipmen are over-surveyed on the topic of sexual assault.**

- “*A sexual assault task force found out that there's definitely survey fatigue, there's also focus group and senior official fatigue and the preponderance of male mids are terrified of even saying anything now because it will result in more surveys, more people to coming to yell at them and more rover watches.*” (Military)
- “*The mids are very busy. And we have filled every white space of time minus those programmed liberty periods, and then saying in this programmed white space we're going to fill in this survey or that meeting or that brief. Twenty years ago we had more white space when we were here. Now it's insane. Death by a thousand cuts.*” (Military)
- “*When you're in the fleet I know survey fatigue is rampant as well. I can speak for myself you get tired of it.*” (Military)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to publicize that the biennial cycle of surveys and focus groups was designed to minimize survey fatigue on gender issues for midshipmen at the Academy along with the importance of the data gathered in the survey.
- ◆ Another opportunity might exist to limit the number of other gender-related surveys administered each year – comments by midshipmen indicate that they do not readily distinguish among surveys and often believe they have had several similar surveys per year, adding to the perception of being over-surveyed.

### **Location of Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- **Faculty and staff indicated that dorms, classrooms, and locker rooms are possible locations of USC.**

- “*I know several have spawned from people coming back inebriated from downtown and wandering in somebody's room that happened to be open.*”  
(Athletic)
  - “*I think the place is completely unsupervised when any of this stuff is going on. Banker's hours, I bet you got zero going on. As soon as the sun sets, this is where all your numbers come from.*” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that the midshipman structure makes the dorms different from civilian dorms.**
  - “*The circumstances, if I think about the Academy, they would lend themselves to increase the possibility someone would be victimized. It's being trapped in your room, not being allowed by rule to leave, and especially if for whatever reason your roommate is gone on a movement order or something like that, you're in your room by yourself. There are things it seems to me that especially shine a light on Bancroft Hall as a place and especially if there's a power relationship, where that might not exist in civilian college. You have a senior and a junior, it seems like Bancroft Hall allows victimization in a way other places around the yard may not. It might be isolated but the same relationships don't apply.*”  
(Faculty)
  - “*Most the anecdotes I've heard have been about Bancroft Hall. I think it's being stuck in your room, the power structure, the culture of the leaving the door unlocked. The lower down you are in terms of the younger you are the fewer freedoms you have to be able to come and go.*” (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that midshipmen USC incidents most likely occur on campus but start downtown.**
  - “*The inference we make is things start in town. And we're the only Service Academy that is located by all the pubs or closely, starts there and rolls back to home. And that's when the incidents can occur.*” (Military)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that locking doors could help prevent sexual assault in the dorms.**
  - “*There was a time when Saturday nights were scary times for women in Bancroft Hall. This was 10 years ago. I asked a mid yesterday about whether this was still the case, where a female company officer housed all her female midshipmen in one stairwell where there were fire doors that could be locked. So they could be in a protected unit, which I thought should not be necessary. This mid said she hadn't heard anything about that, but that Saturday nights can be very empty over*

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to engage midshipmen in addressing the fact that sexual assault occurs on campus when faculty and staff are not present and allow them to develop approaches to monitoring their own behaviors.

*there. And I said ‘Why don't they just lock their doors? You are allowed to lock the door, right?’ She said the presumption is if the door is locked you're doing something wrong in there.”* (Faculty)

- “*Again, this is anecdotal but I know that last year there was somebody in Bancroft Hall going around the night groping women. They actually did have a situation, it's like ‘Lock your doors.’ But I mean that became sort of fraud, now they are supposed to lock their doors and weren't before.”* (Faculty)
  - “*Again, because of the prohibition of consensual sexual contact, right, a locked door isn't allowed because of the possibility of sexual contact going on inside. But that would be at least a deterrent against a possible assault.”* (Faculty)
  - “*As a minimum this whole idea of Saturday night being a dangerous time for midshipmen is incredibly disturbing. As a minimum could that be brought up and looked at in the opportunity that midshipmen are supposed to be trusted, why can't be they trusted to lock their doors? If women are vulnerable at that time they at least have the opportunity to protect themselves. You're taking away a baseline opportunity to protect themselves.”* (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that the new watches have been helpful.**
    - “*Not just a second watch, multiple more watches, which I think helps.”* (Military)
  - **Faculty and staff indicated that USC could occur in academic buildings.**
    - “*I think a lot of academic buildings things go on at night. They're very open, very isolated. You can walk into any academic building almost anywhere except for in someone's office, get around classrooms, there's lot of space.”* (Faculty)
    - “*This is a simple example, but when I walk over to MacDonough Hall, I see midshipmen constantly tearing open a door that's a CAC card access only, constantly. If I don't say something I'd say something's wrong, that's in broad daylight. If there's a will they're going to go with whatever's convenient. I think it's surveillance, just a general security.”* (Athletic)
  - **Faculty and staff noted that there is less surveillance due to budget cuts.**
    - “*The irony is we are getting rid of our three duty officers, it was a budget cut. It's going backward rather than forward supervise-wise.”* (Athletic)
  - **Faculty and staff noted that sexual assault prevention steps are not unique to the Academy.**
    - “*The risk adverse nature I think causes us to have a lot of unnecessary safety check valves so to speak, and it's not analogous always to the fleet. We're setting these folks up with essentially a lot of rules that don't apply. There are a lot of prior enlisted who are going ‘That's dumb.’ They're infiltrating that psyche*

*amongst the mids as well. There's conflicting opinion amongst prior enlisted as well as just kids out of high school.”* (Military)

- **Faculty and staff indicated that USC might occur during midshipmen summer training but is seldom reported.**

- *“I know this has been addressed with frat time going into the summer cruises but I think of all the cases underreported, I think that's the number one underreported case. They're away from their support system and come back. They're the unreported ones. They're very afraid of retribution, just the peer pressure. A lot of times it's in the fleet, trouble is in the fleet. They're afraid they're going to get in trouble because alcohol was involved or they had contact with an enlisted person, and also just the peer pressure in general. They don't want to relive it as it were. By the time they get back here they just want to put it behind them.”* (Military)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to increase awareness of the potential risks while away from campus, particularly during summer training, by providing tips on dealing with active duty members and conducting a debrief of summer experiences to give midshipmen the opportunity to reveal any bad experiences.
- ◆ Another opportunity might exist to develop a “safety net” for reaching out to someone from campus if a situation arises – possibly a contact who the midshipman trusts and would be comfortable calling.

- **Faculty and staff had mixed opinions regarding whether USC incidents are likely to occur when teams travel together.**

- *“I have no idea if this is true, this is one source of information from women who said that in their sense a great deal happens on sports travel teams, sports buses, especially when men and women teams travel together. It's possible that a climate in sports programs accounts for it [the increment in incidence rates]. I don't know if you distinguish between things that happen at Bancroft Hall versus things that happen someplace else.”* (Faculty)
  - *“From my experience we haven't had that. I don't know if others have experienced that, but I don't feel like there's more opportunity for that to happen. Bed checks, you're here at this time, you're here at this time. We're definitely on a schedule. They don't go anywhere by themselves. This is just my team that I work with, but we are at the hotel, we're at dinner together, we are at practice together, you're studying in your room.”* (Athletic)

### **Multiple Incidents of Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- **Faculty and staff indicated sexual assault offenders might repeat their actions because they do not believe they will be reported.**

- “I would think they don't think the person will turn them in.” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated alcohol is a contributing factor in multiple experiences of USC.**
  - “Just from past cases, especially the ones that have been publicized, it goes back to alcohol, and overuse and then putting yourself in a vulnerable position. I don't know how often that happens, but I know quite a few of the incidents that have been publicized lately have come down to that fact.” (Athletic)

### **Victim Blaming**

- **Faculty and staff noted that victim blaming has occurred in the past.**
  - “There was a celebrated case of one West Point cadet and one Naval Academy midshipman who were suing the Services for things. That happened to come out in one of my classes, and it was clear that the people who knew the woman were blaming her because of her reputation here. And the way in which it came up is another woman said, ‘I know what you're going to say about X, I forget what her name was, but I think that's going to happen.’” (Faculty)
  - “I had conversation with a male midshipman over the Marine Corps officer [recently charged with assault]. And he was upset because she was not going to get busted for drinking, even though I found out later she was of age to drink, so it wasn't even misconduct on her part. That was the focus on our conversation was I don't understand why the females don't get punished for their misconduct. I tried to explain that her life is pretty messed up right now, she is probably suffering and they're dealing with it. And he couldn't really – there was no empathy. That to me is a problem too, they don't identify with the victim.” (Faculty)
  - “The common myth I've heard again and again and again this past year is, 'What if we both go out and have a couple of drinks and we enjoy it and then she regrets it the next morning?' So the myth I've heard – the woman wakes embarrassed and calls it rape. It's a huge mythology of women who change their minds in the morning. I've heard that quite a bit.” (Faculty)
  - “The disappointing thing is even enlightened male midshipmen or midshipmen who seem open still hold that belief. That's what's so stunning to me. That it's not

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to educate midshipmen about the victim blaming phenomena and encourage them to understand the facts of an incident before making a judgment.
- ◆ It is important to remind the midshipmen that in these cases, a crime has occurred – blaming victims may foster a culture of acceptance of unwanted gender-related behaviors.

*just some Neanderthal person who thinks that. Like, good, nice thoughtful male midshipmen.”* (Faculty)

- **Faculty and staff indicated that there is a difference between putting oneself in risky situations and being blamed for the incident.**
  - *“I’m smiling because I’m one of those people, like putting yourself in a bad position. If it was me I would put the responsibility on me. I know that’s not always the case, if I’m putting myself in that position, then I need to get myself out of that position. And I don’t think it’s more victim-ish. I know that sounds harsh, a little bit. But I wouldn’t want to be a victim, so I wouldn’t want to put myself in a position to have that happen to me. Clearly not everyone feels that way. They are looking to blame a little more than they’re looking to take responsibility.”* (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that midshipmen advise each other when someone engages in risky behavior.**
  - *“I think the system’s pretty good. We have had a couple gals that have taken provocative pictures of themselves that have come out and their teammates or the administration has gotten on them right away to counsel them. Here’s how maybe you’re being perceived. And let’s intercept it at a fairly early time so you don’t objectify yourself. The system’s been pretty helpful, I think females on females are almost the hardest saying what are you doing, you’re giving us all a bad reputation by objectifying yourself.”* (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that when facts are not known, rumors develop.**
  - *“Rumor central is Bancroft Hall. Whatever the story is, the case, I find that midshipmen tend to believe the person they heard it from versus maybe they’re going to believe the first source versus the third or fourth source away.”* (Athletic)

### **Use of Alcohol**

- **Faculty and staff indicated alcohol is typically involved in incidents of USC.**
  - *“I expected it to be involved in nearly every case.”* (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff indicated the alcohol policies have mixed consequences.**
  - *“We have a double-edge sword here because alcohol is involved, predominantly involved, no question there. But how do you address it so you minimize or discourage misconduct? And the current policy is very harsh on consequences. So it can discourage someone from coming forward for fear of secondary punishment.”* (Military)

- “I think the rates went down when we had the Commandant who never let them outside the gate 12 years ago, if we want to go back to puritanical times. Morale was terrible then too, so it's a Catch 22.” (Athletic)
  - “With a previous Superintendent we've gone through this cycle before. I think the proof is in the pudding. It wasn't Animal House, but it was.... They created this thing on the campus, on the yard here where they had a club for them to drink over above Hubbard Hall. As the year went on it got – this was just drinking. I don't know about any of the numbers.” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that midshipmen's stressful schedule often drives them to excessive drinking.**
  - “Because they don't get or are able to drink alcohol except for on the weekends. There are guidelines they're supposed to follow but the midshipmen don't always follow that. There's binge drinking that happens. But we're not all there to be able to see it or prevent it. We try to help have the midshipmen watch each other, help be each other's keeper but that doesn't always work either. If you get someone who gets separated from the herd they could be in real danger.” (Military)
  - “I think they do need more freedom. They need more free time instead of regulated time. If they break the rules then hammer them. And make them understand there are consequences.” (Military)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that the use of breathalyzers appears to be useful in signaling that proper behavior is expected and violations will be punished.**
  - “I'd be curious to see when we started breathalyzing in the Hall when people came back, it probably gave them the ability to go off campus, but maybe not get quite so inebriated. I don't see any statistical difference from the one that was implemented. [The 1/1/3 campaign, one drink, one hour, three max per night] that was great. Kids were scared to come back. It taught them responsibility because they got to go downtown. But I don't know, be interesting to correlate if there was any change in sexual inappropriateness. That's when you heard about the fear of God coming back in the Hall and getting breathalyzed.” (Athletic)

### **Faculty and Staff Recommendations**

- **Strengthen the punishment for offenders.**
  - “The thing that amazes me most is there's a lack of punishment policy, I'm shocked to be honest. We have this thing in black and white on the streets of harassment and assault. It should be zero tolerance policy, you did it, you're out. Do the investigation, you have to go.” (Faculty)

- Continue awareness training and bystander training.
  - “One of the things you can also tell them, granted you’re coming to the Naval Academy, yes the military itself is a smaller segment of society. We have the same knuckleheads in here as you do out there. If you put it to them that way they already know. Yes, we may be considered the cream of the crop here, but in that cream of the crop there’s some rotten apples in there, so be aware. If you see it, report it.” (Military)

### **Sexual Harassment and Sexist Behavior**

Similar to the midshipmen focus groups, this set of questions posed a hypothesis about the relationship of verbally offensive behaviors, such as sexual harassment and sexist comments, on USC. The facilitator began by sharing results from the 2012 SAGR on rates of sexual harassment and sexist behavior at the Academy over the past four surveys and hearing participants’ reactions. The facilitator then gave additional findings based on 2012 SAGR that those men and women who experienced USC in the past year also tended to experience sexual harassment and sexist behavior at higher rates. Participants commented on the possible relationships among these unwanted gender-related behaviors and what the impact might be of addressing the verbal behaviors and possibly reducing USC. Following up, the facilitator asked if cultural factors, such as attitudes of disrespect toward women, contributed to USC. This section ended with a discussion of recommendations for decreasing sexual harassment and sexist behavior.

### **Familiarity with Incidence Rates from 2012 SAGR**

- Faculty and staff thought the rates of sexual harassment and sexist behaviors seemed low given the pervasiveness of sexist comments.
  - “I’d probably say it’s low [sexual harassment]. I would think probably closer to 85 percent.” (Faculty)
  - “What I picked up from reading your online stuff of the focus groups of two years ago where a woman midshipmen said ‘Oh, if you’re talking about what I hear, 15 times a day, right.’ I think if you’re talking about a negative environment for these women to be in, listening to the comments about somebody else’s fat ass, somebody else being a slut, overhearing it all day long which is what the women tell me, they overhear all day long.” (Faculty)
- Faculty and staff indicated sexist behavior among midshipmen is partly a cultural issue.
  - “Part of the coarseness of the environment, I think that allows that. The environment here is coarse, roughhewn. They learn things here.” (Faculty)
  - “I’ve heard it in the women’s locker room so foul I have to go around and say I can’t believe I’m hearing this from you. I believe the coarseness, I don’t think it’s

*just men who are doing this. I think the women for whatever reason follow this coarse behavior that is really unbecoming and unprofessional.”* (Athletic)

- “*We've had a lot of problems with the men's lacrosse, sexist behavior. And they produce more SEALs than any other team as well. And a lot of Marines, like sprint football. So they're fantastic at what they do but that genre of the ‘mano y mano’ rough around the edges, I don't know if the sport attracts it or sport cultivates it here. Even some famous players, they were the biggest jerks to the women.”* (Athletic)

OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ A strategy for changing the culture of “coarseness” to professionalism might be a useful topic for discussion with midshipmen within their company – how they would approach it, implement change, and monitor progress.

- **Faculty and staff think midshipmen develop sexist attitudes over time.**

- “*I think from my vantage point I think what I see and hear is where these comments come from it's a learned, macho, I don't know the right word. They don't come here with some of these attitudes. Either it's a risk taker who has just become a deviant and not been accounted for or doesn't care. And I hate to say it, hopefully you guys agree, there's a faction within the population, when they leave here I think their attitude toward people and specifically women in this regard has been flawed.”* (Athletic)
- “*In a formal setting you'll get the answer you're supposed to hear, but I would stay people that are still rough on the edges that contain their true beliefs or got some beliefs that have been enhanced here that again, social misfits.”* (Athletic)
- “*It seems like it gets engrained. If you watch them during plebe summer they're a pretty cohesive unit, girls and guys work all together, they're well respected. But then as they come up through the ranks they're trained to go to the dark side. I don't know how you stop that influence.”* (Athletic)

OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to instill professional attitudes in midshipmen before inappropriate ones take hold, through persistent efforts across multiple years at the Academy.

### ***Relationship to Unwanted Sexual Contact***

- **Faculty and staff indicated that some midshipmen might be more sensitive to comments; hence they indicate more frequent experiences.**
- “*I think that maybe since they've been assaulted they have a finer hearing, they're more attuned.”* (Faculty)

- “*If you said I've experienced unwanted sexual contact, you're more likely to say I've experienced sexual harassment. Is there any chance someone who's sexually assault or unwanted sexual contact, is more keenly aware of incidents than other people?*” (Military)
- **Faculty and staff indicated sexist behavior is a tool used by offenders.**
  - “*You have a competitive environment; everybody is just wired to compete for something. That's a good thing most of the time. But I think for your predator who is competitive, they're going to spot vulnerabilities.*” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff feel that reducing sexual harassment and sexist behavior might help in reducing USC.**
  - “*In my classroom I have very strong feelings from the first day about the language. Obviously if I'm being talked to or if I'm around it, I say that explicitly every semester for me that's offensive. I make it very clear at the outset. Also because I feel it trickles down to professional behavior. It trickles down to what my expectations are, how I expect them to treat me in general. And the respect that hopefully will evolve for me in the time in the classroom.*” (Faculty)
  - “*If you have a broken window in your neighborhood or unmowed lawn it leads to more crime. I think there's definitely a linkage. Terrible analogy perhaps.*” (Military)

### **Faculty and Staff Recommendations**

- **Eliminate peer ranking to help diminish attitudes of disrespect.**
  - “*The fact that in their company they are asked to grade or rank each other every year, each peer rank to me is one of the most nefarious things I can imagine having to do to a group of people that you want to live together collaboratively.*” (Faculty)
  - “*There's a social desirability bias. All the midshipmen think it's a popularity contest.*” (Faculty)
  - “[*Telling someone their comments are offensive] will translate into a hit which translates into an overall order of merit hit if you become unpopular because you've spoken truth.*” (Faculty)
- **Engage senior leaders in activities like brown bag lunches for emphasis.**
  - “*They're trying to reach out to more people on the yard with brown bag lunches. I think it would be powerful if a coach or senior person ended that brown bag lunch. People would think sometimes you forget you have employees and say I'm going to this and invite someone along. That's when you start gaining some support, the underground support. You have to have cool and hip people go in or*

*old people with influence go in to make it, make it something, an important priority.”* (Military)

- Continue leadership training for team captains.

- “As adults and coaches who are in charge of a lot of people we should be able to point out who needs help with the language they're using or type of behaviors they have. Maybe it's the next step with getting them some sort of help. I was thinking about the captains' leadership weekend, how that's been a big improvement for molding the captains who will be next season's leaders. They go for a weekend. That's time, that's money, there are a lot of other things that maybe we don't have, but it seems that is a positive for them, everybody came out of it with a positive reaction.” (Athletic)

OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ This leadership training for team captains can serve as an example of training for other student leaders in effecting cultural change.
- ◆ When midshipmen know they are responsible for the behavior of others, they may be more likely to use their influence to correct others who are exhibiting improper behaviors.

- Improve the initial screening process.

- “This is not my own term, but emotional intelligence is something we don't screen for very well. We look for the academic intelligence and certainly we are looking for the physical. But in terms of how they conduct themselves, the same point I was making earlier, that's missed in admissions. I had a conversation with both the Commandant and the Dean of Admissions about the books, and there's some articles that recently came out again, some follow ups. I said this goes right to the root of all problems we have here at Navy, if you can catch that behavior before they even step in the admission site. SATs are important, but that could be the worst person on the planet and we are going to let them in because they got 800/800. Right there is an area that we're missing that would filter out so much. If we can figure it out.” (Athletic)

### ***Roles and Responsibilities***

In this section of questions, participants were asked how they perceived their roles with respect to preventing and responding to USC. They were asked to describe the interactions they have with students on these issues, their interactions with the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) staff, and recommendations for helping them better deal with issues.

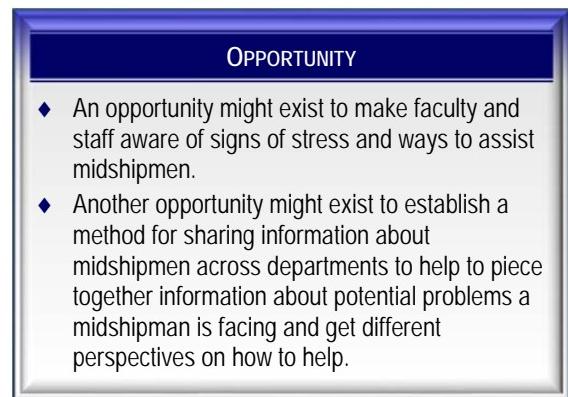
#### ***Perceived Roles***

- Faculty and staff members see themselves as a resource on gender issues.
  - “[Do you see yourselves, the faculty, as a resource to discuss gender issues with them?] Group response: Of course. Yes.” (Faculty)

- “*We're here year after year after year. We know how these shifts come and go. There's a great wealth of resource in faculty but it's hardly ever tapped.*”  
 (Faculty)
  - “*The faculty, I think has maybe on average some other experiences to help midshipmen that officers don't.*”  
 (Faculty)
  - “*I think just in general when I've had midshipmen who know they're getting in trouble for something, I don't know the exact number but it seems like about 50/50 they're going to come to me first or the other half of the time I find out whether I was looking for it or not.*” (Athletic)
- **Faculty members have a unique opportunity to work with midshipmen from an academic perspective.**
  - “*Faculty can do something, we have a great opportunity, because we don't have to frame sexuality merely in negative terms, either something consensual you'll be in trouble for or as assault. We approach things as educational instead of training. I think midshipmen take to that difference, they understand it right away. They understand if it's training, shut down, get through it. And oftentimes, at least sometimes in education they can do other things. I think we as faculty, I try to do this, but it's good, these kinds of things, the focus group, remind us this is something we need to be engaging in in the classroom.*” (Faculty)
  - “*The faculty members have to have a certain level of experience and maturity to do this. And some junior officers don't have that, I think you would agree, and maybe they are not the ones to do that. But people who have been around and working with students as faculty members, they have credibility, officers have credibility that immediately if they are accepted because they wear the uniform that we have to earn as civilians. So I hope when we're talking about faculty we're talking all the faculty.*” (Faculty)
- **Faculty members can work with midshipmen on gender issues if they know Academy policies and facts.**
  - “*If we know the information then we're able to help in that way to help in these things. If we have the information, a lot of times kids will say things and I don't have the information. I can refute it or not. It gets to be the big rumor mill.*” (Faculty)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist to more fully engage faculty and staff in a coordinated manner in helping midshipmen deal with gender-related issues and attitudes.</li> <li>◆ Individual staff members have their own personal relationships with students, but a cultural change requires a shared goal and steps to achieve it.</li> <li>◆ Faculty, military cadre, athletic staff, and senior leaders each have unique relationships with midshipmen and can have influence on different aspects of behavior.</li> </ul>

- “*Going back to some of the other points about engaging faculty, I find that especially with the midshipmen rank structure and the military structure above them, that they may feel more free, more able to freely speak to faculty or not in their direct chain of command. And if we're not informed about what is really going on in this other part of their lives, we don't have the tools to be able to help keep those conversations going, keep that communication open.*” (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that helping a midshipman with self-esteem issues can help them avoid risky behaviors.**
  - “*I know we had one girl who was having multiple partners at one. She had very poor self-esteem. That's helpful for us to talk to the women, we can tag them and say you're going down, here are some of the things we've seen. A lot of times your self-esteem needs bolstering and that shouldn't be the way you should build up your self-esteem. I don't know if that makes a difference for telling them we think you're a great person, don't compromise yourself. Usually we don't hear about it until it's too late.*” (Athletic)
  - “*Males are used to being kidded on the playing field like, ‘You suck,’ whereas we'd be like, ‘Nice shot,’ or ‘You'll do better next time.’ So it takes about two years for the women to change that mantra where she didn't internalize the criticism and the self-esteem. It's an adjustment of women's self-esteem going down much further than the males, if you can measure that.*” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that an opportunity exists for discussion among staff about midshipmen issues.**
  - “[*Regarding resources to help faculty and staff.] We have a women's coach group led by a psychologist in the Midshipmen Development Center. She's brought all the head coaches together on the women's side. And so we talk about issues in coaching women in the Academy and that's been helpful I think. Opening issues for the table.*” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that senior leadership does not use them as effectively as they could in helping educate midshipmen on gender issues and assisting with problems.**
  - “*That's the function of a top down place. That's why it's hard for them to see us in that way. It's, this person tells these people and that's the way it works.*” (Faculty)



- “*I would say there's an opportunity for us to engage. We are academic professors, it doesn't come up very often, the readings, things don't really lend itself very well. The time that I engage in these type of conversations with students is oftentimes there's a lot of conversation that goes on in the classroom before class begins. They don't think you're there. Like you don't have hearing until you say it's time to start and suddenly you listen because you hear ghastly things between those 10-minute breaks that they say. It's been those times I've been able to engage in other conversations with them about respect and dignity and things like that.*” (Faculty)
  - “*Trust, you don't have to give me the training that I need to transmit, that will never work. Trust me to give me a discussion to talk in the classroom.*” (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff noted that activities outside the classroom also present opportunities to interact with midshipmen on gender issues.**
  - “*My own experience is I get closer to these issues with students when I'm not in the classroom. I can't imagine how an engineer or chemist can take time out to discuss gender issues in the brigade. Maybe if it arises with careers or disciplines or something, but it's not necessarily appropriate to the classroom in most classrooms. For one thing we grade them. They don't want to say the wrong thing, they want to say the right thing and they will say the right thing to you. Many of us are either continually or on and off engaged with mids in other forms. [Out of the classroom], that's where I meet the students in a capacity you can talk to them. I don't know if there's any moment at which all the faculty reps are gotten together by whoever runs activities or whoever and they have a discussion group. ‘Look, here's the kind of thing we are worried about on the activities. Can you help us?’ That kind of collaboration never happens. If you're called together you're given the gouge by get them here by 8:00 o'clock, just mechanical stuff.*” (Faculty)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist to engage faculty and staff members in less official roles to make them more approachable.</li> <li>◆ An example might be to encourage faculty and staff members to visit club meetings or team practices to get to know midshipmen via shared interests – raising the comfort level in talking to someone outside their normal role.</li> </ul>

- **Faculty and staff indicated that building trust in leadership among midshipmen will help lead to more frequent reporting.**
  - “*One frustrating element to the study [2012 SAGR survey] that I saw was near the end of the study talked about basically trusting the chain of command and fear of reporting. And, man, it's frustrating because we beat the drums about trust the chain of command and here are all these procedures. And I think at the risk of more education which can turn into white noise with the amount of effort we're putting in, it seems like there is concern about reporting because they don't think it will be kept quiet or someone will be unfairly evaluated at the end of the*

*semester on ranking, something that goes towards their class rank. That should be something we could easily address that might end up at least leading to better reporting, which you would think would get, if there's a predator out there, would start removing the number of incidents.”* (Military)

- **Some Academy staff members send mixed signals about proper conduct with their own behavior.**
  - *“I think for the most part company officers and SELs can understand what the midshipmen are going through have open lines of communication. I think midshipmen get a lot of mixed signals from staff and faculty outside of Bancroft. Whether it be on the sport field or instructor or even a mentor they've gotten with somehow, those outside of Bancroft, folks aren't as careful with things they say and think. Where company officers and SELs, we are seen sitting through the same training that midshipmen are going through.”* (Military)
  - *“I'm sure other the other Service Academies are similar. There are three power brokers at the Naval Academy: the Commandant in Bancroft Hall, triple A, and academia. And the head is the Superintendent. Interplay is about winning games and that machinery. Academia could care less about military training, they're professors, they teach. And then there's that dynamic struggle between those three power brokers to do the full mission. The primary focus of those two other entities is academics and athletics. And we can push it but I think we get into a clash of cultures. I think everyone recognizes we're all on the same team but everyone has really different principal interest or secondary interest that they still feel passionate about. I don't want to say they're adversarial but there's a constant friction.”* (Military)
  - *“If you're drinking in front of the midshipman and still telling the midshipman not to drink, it's not going to work out too well. Granted, treat them like an adult but at 17, 18, 19 they're not adults yet. They cannot handle it.”* (Military)
- **Military staff indicated they have many duties that take away time from personal interaction with midshipmen.**
  - *“I think a company officer is barely hanging on with all the stuff they're required to do to really have free time, open door time to help their midshipmen.”* (Military)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ An opportunity might exist to develop a coordinated vision of the culture at the Academy and to establish messages for faculty and staff members to display.</li><li>◆ The message needs to be consistent and reinforced in order to shape the attitudes and behaviors of the midshipmen.</li></ul>

- “If you're not going to increase the number of companies, the expectation that company officers have collateral duties. I teach, I coach. There isn't enough time to know all 150 midshipmen as well as you should.” (Military)
- “One of the things I'm hearing from them is they want more, during the sexual harassment and response education, SHAPE, they want more company officer SEL involvement in that. So there's more face time. But again, you know, who has time for that? Not that it's not important, not that it's not a priority. But it's one more thing. It is to give the perception that this is a serious issue and we are taking it seriously.” (Military)
- **Faculty and staff indicated alumni also have an influence on midshipmen.**
  - “It's not just the alumni and nostalgia, that's not a bad thing. It's hearing the message we try to provide in Bancroft or Luce Hall or wherever it is about respect and professionalism and responsible drinking and so forth. Then they get to a tailgate after the football game and it all goes away.” (Military)

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to engage alumni in reinforcing the vision for the culture – alumni can have considerable influence over midshipmen if they reiterate a message consistent with that of the Academy leadership.

### ***Interactions with SAPR Staff***

- **Military staff members interact with SAPR staff as needed.**
  - “I think we are SAPR-ed out. We had SAPR-L, SAPR-F, changed to SHAPE program.” (Military)
  - “I look at it like I don't really want to get into it too much until it's a problem for me or someone I have to deal with. That's my gut reaction. Truth be told I'm a POC, but that's how I looked at it.” (Military)
  - “Before I got here I was shocked we even had a full time staff. I didn't realize there was a requirement for it. I didn't understand why the mids would need it full time. Now I get here and realize it's not even big enough.” (Military)
- **Military staff members felt SAPR training for leaders could be improved.**
  - “The company officers and SELs are the first line of defense. There's inconsistency I think in a very short two months task force that they need more training. And I hate to say that but the programs we have here on SHAPE – what do they go through, I know they go through a preview. I don't want to say the word mandatory, but encourage company officers and SELs to be victims' advocates and go through training.” (Military)

- “Before we become company officers, we get a brief instruction of all the different programs at the Academy. Frankly I don’t remember the SHAPE or SAPR before I became a company officer though.” (Military)
- **Some faculty and staff felt SAPR training for staff was helpful.**
  - “I think they’ve educated us on the proper channels, who to seek out. Whether it was someone who was or someone who did that I was working with, I would encourage them to do the right thing and make sure that they don’t make this worse than it can be.” (Athletic)
  - “I had wanted to be more involved [with safe-space training] and being that liaison you put the thing on your door says you’re a safe space to come and talk with. Again, I wasn’t able to do the training so I’m looking forward to do it in the future. It was to be a faculty liaison or a place to go if you needed to talk. A resource. It was only a two-hour type training. No in depth training where I’d be certified to do any sort of. I wish I could tell you how it was working.” (Athletic)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to coordinate SAPR training with the overall culture objectives.
- ◆ Another opportunity might exist to use the staff training to help standardize the message to midshipmen about professionalism and respect while also providing tools for staff members to deal with specific issues when they arise.

### **Faculty and Staff Recommendations**

- Continue to provide training with SEL company officers.
  - “One change we did do, not watches or anything, the existing training was midshipmen run, added SEL company officers with fleet experience. First concern was, well, now there’s someone watching and so it might not be as open. But their shared experiences and sea stories were found to be beneficial.” (Military)
- Monitor the sponsorship program.
  - “The sponsors do get training done on the rules the midshipmen have to follow. They are trained on the programs here to support someone who has been assaulted or something like that. We do tell them about the restricted and unrestricted reporting, so that they don’t tell the wrong person if a midshipman doesn’t want to have their chain of command involved, but they still need the counseling. The ones we found out about [who do not adhere to the rules] are removed.” (Military)
  - “There’s required updated training for all sponsors, anyone who’s been a sponsor in the past that we’re doing now in the next few months.” (Military)

- “One of the things I would recommend is that every now and then take a trip to the PX [Post Exchange], because all the alcohol has been moved into the PX. There's no longer a central place for it. It's all on the PX, take a trip over there on the weekend, I know it's your time but on a weekend and see how many midshipmen come in with their sponsors that are not active duty, that are not retired, but they're purchasing alcohol for the sponsor and they're taking it out of there.” (Military)
- **Make conversations with midshipmen relevant.**
  - “Yes, you can try to control it a little more [monitoring sponsors]. Not everybody's going to be in the parking lot and notice that there are four or five underage. But talking about it, making this hip is the biggest thing we need to do. It's not hip, it's NKO driven or it's very stuffy. It has always been that way. There are artificial things in place. What I'm saying about hip is, focus groups in my opinion can be hip the way they're set up. This is a senior hip meeting so to speak. I enjoy speaking with you but the majority of us are at a senior level, or middle grade in my case, but very senior folks. But for young people we need them taken in context, you have to make it interesting. Make it hip.” (Military)
  - “One thing we miss here, we say we can relate to the sailors because we have sailors in the fleet, these aren't your typical sailors in the fleet. I think we do a poor job at Service Academies to train me and everyone else in this room on what is generational difference, so you can understand and you can connect and relate. And that could break down some of that mistrust of chain of command that could allow a company officer or someone to be more perceptive where the danger areas are.” (Military)
  - “I think understanding the consequences, sometimes we say things but you don't then go around the corner and see what it does to that person. Unless you have been a part of it or experienced it yourself, you can't say ‘Oh, I would do this in this situation’ until you're really in that situation. Going back to the captains where they've been put in scenarios where they have to make decisions. It's a lot harder than sitting at the table watching the PowerPoint screens as you said. It's understanding what it feels like to be in the situation and understanding the consequences of how it makes you feel.” (Athletic)
- **Encourage faculty and staff to be more approachable.**
  - “We're all so busy, and it's really easy for us to get tied in the office because we are tasked with all these surveys we have to fill out. I think that's the age old question. I'm not sure, how do we get out from behind the desk.” (Military)
  - “There are lot of opportunities there too because they are interacting with military faculty and staff on a daily basis for different things, maybe not as much as the company officers are, the direct hands, but some point, myself, there are five mids I see on a somewhat regular basis I can interact with. I'm actually staff,

*not faculty. But I've got to think with the faculty they have the same exposure.”* (Military)

- “*Even as a staff when I was on active duty I spent more time in and out of the barracks just going there to make sure my guys were safe. We didn't have locks on the doors, they didn't have to sign in. But I would knock on the door and say how's it going? What's wrong with you today, you didn't seem right at work today, what's the situation, how is home. Even on board ship I did the same thing with guys on board ship. There are things you can do. You can stop them in the hallway. It's just there. It's whether or not we want to do it or not, that's the big issue.*” (Military)

### ***Cultural Change***

The facilitator began this section by stating that some people believe the Academy can improve USC prevention and response by changing the culture and attitudes toward this issue. Participants were asked if they agreed and how such change could be made. The section ended with a question about the usefulness of a Dignity and Respect Code.

#### ***Need for Cultural Change***

- Faculty and staff indicated there is a need for cultural change in addition to programs.
  - “*Those kind of things [the new watches] bother me because they don't get at the root. We blame alcohol for a lot of things. You can try to turn it around from happening but kids are going to drink. It's changing the attitudes about the issue that's crucial and changing the attitude in Bancroft Hall is a difficult thing. That subculture is pretty strong.*” (Faculty)
  - “*The question you asked how could we change things, right. He said we have to change culture. I can't help but think even the really nice midshipmen are a product of the culture as it currently exists. I wish there were a way that the Academy would engage the culture.*” (Faculty)
  - “*By having two men on a ‘rape watch’ that's not going to prevent anything. They know it doesn't prevent anything. They become resentful and resentful of the women who reported things to begin with. My big fear is there's going to be a silencing of reports, that midshipmen feel as if big Navy's response was being upset about numbers, numbers of reports rather than being upset about being upset by human beings, and finding ways to deal with human beings is important.*” (Faculty)
  - “*Professional conduct, these are your colleagues, these are not your enemies. These are your work people. These are the people you*

#### **OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to foster culture change by leadership sending a coordinated message of support, embracing zero tolerance of USC through a heightened sense of professionalism and respect that encourages midshipmen to “own” the concept.

*have to get the missions done with. You should not be tearing each other down.”*  
(Faculty)

- **Faculty and staff indicated that command needs to support changing the culture.**
  - *“It makes getting the people in charge feel like they're doing something, check. And that's about it. I think one of the things that has not helped is the attitude of the command to the problem of their response as a sort of chastising, punishing, why have you all done this. That's not the response that's required. I think it revictimizes the victims, for one. It's going to discourage future reporting because I don't want to be the one causing problems and making everyone mad. I think there needs to be a more sympathetic meaningful involvement of the command in these issues, which I don't know if that's even possible.”* (Faculty)
  - *“As a faculty member here I can tell you I feel very uninformed about these issues. When I saw the documentary or read the survey I'm surprised there isn't more conversation going on among the faculty, among the leadership. It surprises me. I get the sense it's being minimized, even the name of calling this gender relations. Gender relations, this is sexual assault. That idea we are trying to minimize it, that disturbs me.”* (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that midshipmen need to be part of the solution towards culture change.**
  - *“To really get toward a solution to this it's easier said than done but it has to start with them, it's got to be their solution, the midshipmen I mean. They decide the right course of action and the right people within the brigade are the ones that lead it, the ones that have influence that are respected and admired have to be the one that lead it. And we have to support, right, in a way that's meaningful and visible for them, rather than have it come from the top down. But I don't know how you do that.”* (Faculty)
  - *“I don't know they really understand the full scope of the problem yet. So I think they need a little help with that.”* (Faculty)
  - *“It's so hard to have the conversation, to begin to have the conversation among midshipmen. Because as soon as you start mentioning sexual and assault in the same sentence or sexual and harassment in the same sentence they immediately click into that, oh, here we go again mode. And I think men especially feel like it's, this is their turn to be on the firing squad as being, as victimizing women. I think they feel defensive immediately. It's really hard to even start having a meaningful conversation about it.”* (Faculty)
- **Culture at the Academy reflects society to some degree.**
  - *“The things they go through as teenagers – they're really teenagers. The sexting thing, we get applications with misbehavior, they have to report it. Sexting is very*

*rampant even in middle school. I think that's really scary for parents. But these are things didn't exist back in the '80s and '90s. I think part of it is this awareness on all levels of what is going on in this population. And what the challenges are in their subculture of being teenagers these days. I'm appalled at some of the things they think is acceptable.”* (Military)

### **Affecting Cultural Change**

- Faculty and staff indicated that engaging midshipmen in thoughtful training can help change attitudes.
  - “*Gender Matters* that the English department does every year, self-produced by the students. There was a real good one when Admiral Ryan was Superintendent when they brought in those guys from outside. Remember the group of college age men who went around with skits and stuff about the realities. That worked really well with men who saw it. If every year you could have at least one of those events, let's engage. It may need to bleed over to gays or bleed over to minorities. They are fundamentally dignity and respect issues. You don't always have to be hammering it as sexual assault. Every year have one of these things that everybody's stops, ‘Wow, that was really cool.’” (Faculty)
  - “*It can't be mandatory.*” (Faculty)
  - “*SAVI reps like their training. Each team has a sexual assault victims' intervention coordinator. That's elected by each team, on the women's side anyhow. Where the team votes who it is they think the most compassionate approachable person is. It's good, it's a democratic scenario. By company as well. But it was smarter on the team because they reveal probably more in that.*” (Athletic)
- Faculty and staff indicated steps are being taken to change the culture.
  - “*We teach an ethics class which is required for sophomores, I don't know if the other Service Academies do it. We talk about right and wrongdoing, doing the morally right thing and character. We don't spend any time talking about this is a case study. It could be introduced with the curricula pretty easily.*” (Military)
  - “*I think it's gotten better over time anyhow. You're losing that generation that said 'There were never any women at my Academy.' They're all dying off. We have racial diversity so that's not a stigma anymore. And the things in place, if somebody says something inappropriate to you, with that guy recently, the girl didn't report the harassment, all the guys reported on her behalf because they were so mortified. People are much more, I think willing to step forward each generation. So it seems as if the culture is progressing slowly, just taking time.*” (Athletic)

- “Our school alma mater was, the first line, ‘Our college men.’ Three years ago the Superintendent said ‘That’s dumb, we’re not men.’ So it’s colleges. So those little things that serendipitously made you think, wait, I’m not one of those men, I shouldn’t be here. They’re going away. Tear down the wall.” (Athletic)

### **Dignity and Respect Code**

- Faculty and staff think a Dignity and Respect Code would duplicate core values.
  - “We have core values. I think we are duplicating efforts if we try to create something that I think the Navy already has. We say we should be modeling like the fleet. Why reinvent something that is targeted for the same purpose?” (Military)
- Faculty and staff indicated that emphasizing the Sailor’s Creed might help encourage dignity and respect.
  - “Are the sailors perfect, no. They still mess up. But I tell you what, you ask them what their core values are, you tell them tell you the Sailor’s Creed, it’s somewhere engrained into them in day one in boot camp and every day we have a training across the water. Where did you mess up in your honor, courage, and commitment? You know about it, you’re expected to know it.” (Military)

### **Additional Faculty and Staff Recommendations**

The final major area of discussion in the 2013 SAGR focus groups was titled simply “Additional recommendations for addressing USC and sexual harassment.” The purpose was to spend a few minutes reflecting on the general discussion of factors influencing USC at the Academy and to drive out any other good ideas from the participants on ways to reduce it. The facilitator ended the focus groups by asking for any final thoughts on issues and if there were any questions that were not asked but should have been.

### **Final Thoughts**

- Faculty and staff do not think midshipmen are as prepared as they need to be for duty upon graduation.
  - I’ve sat through some of that training. What I’ve sat through is an hour of training. Is an hour of training enough to make you an expert on what to do if that would happen to you or if someone was to come to you? I don’t think it does.” (Athletic)
  - “I don’t think some of them are ready to take on some of these – they haven’t had the experience, or the compassion, or the ability to lead the discussion when they are an officer yet. That’s just simply because they’re 22 years old. They’ll get through it but I don’t think they’re going to do a good job with it. I don’t know how you fix that.” (Athletic)



## **Chapter 6: U.S. Air Force Academy Cadets**

Seven cadet focus group sessions were conducted at USAFA from March 11-14, 2013. Each session was scheduled for a 90-minute period. There was one session each for men and women held for freshmen, seniors, and sophomores and juniors combined. A single mixed-gender session of juniors and seniors was also held. Each session had between nine and seventeen students.

### ***Sexual Assault***

The *2013 SAGR* focus groups devoted a majority of the time to topics designed to gather students' perceptions on unwanted sexual contact (USC) and their recommendations for reducing the prevalence. In each topical area the facilitator made an effort to drive out causes for behaviors or situations being discussed and recommendations for improvement.

The discussions began by sharing with the participants the USC rates from the *2012 SAGR* and asking whether cadets had seen those results. Cadets were asked to discuss why the rates have increased across the past four survey years. Additional questions were posed for their knowledge of where incidents were most likely to occur, their thoughts on victims experiencing multiple incidents of USC over time, and the role of "sexting" and pornography. Cadets further contributed comments on the role alcohol plays in USC and when during the day it is more likely to occur.

### ***Familiarity with Incidence Rates from 2012 SAGR***

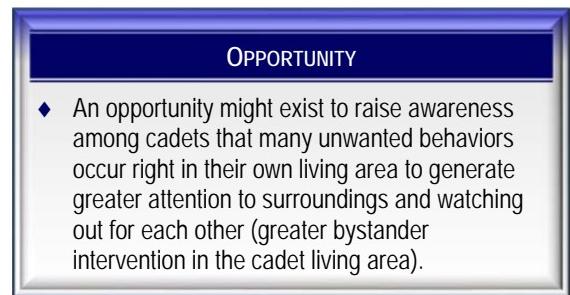
- Reactions to the USC incidence rates from the *2012 SAGR* survey varied among cadets.
  - “[*Group consensus had not seen the results of the survey.*]” (Males)
  - “*I guess that's higher than what I would expect. But I've never seen numbers of any sort, even from previous years.*” (Male)
  - “*I'm not surprised.*” (Female)
  - “*I think it's lower than what I expected it to be, especially with all the different cases I've heard going on.*” (Female)
  - “*Of course, any is bad, but 1.7 percent, I would say, is pretty low and to be expected, I guess, among men. I'm not really shocked.*” (Female)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ An opportunity might exist for DMDC to work with the Academies to prepare a briefing or handout of <i>2012 SAGR</i> and future survey results tailored to each Academy.</li><li>◆ Another opportunity might exist to use the results of the <i>2012 SAGR</i> survey to generate discussion during sexual assault training sessions, classes, or squadron discussion sessions. Engaging students in discussions and problem solving may help give them a sense of ownership of the solution.</li></ul>

- “It’s not shocking to me, but I think it’s a little higher than what I would expect [for women]. I think we’re definitely made aware of what it is. We have a lot of briefings and stuff that tell us what that kind of behavior is and how it’s not acceptable. So I can see why people report it more [on the survey].” (Female)
- “Way higher at other schools, I feel like. Way higher.” (Male)
- Focus group participants indicated that cadets might be more likely to recognize that they experienced one of the USC behaviors as a result of their training and increased emphasis by the Academy.
  - “I don’t think the numbers are actually shifting that much. Many people have a better understanding of what it is, so they’re reporting it more than they were before.” (Female)
  - “Now that they’ve started the SARC thing where you can tell them but they don’t have to tell anyone else, I feel that makes people a lot more comfortable in admitting they’ve been sexually assaulted. A lot of times they don’t want people to know. They keep it as a closed case. So probably one of the reasons that the numbers have risen is because people started admitting they’ve been sexually assaulted, maybe not necessarily that more sexual assaults have happened.” (Female)
  - “It’s probably going up just because people are more encouraged to come forward or say something about it. That’s the way I see it.” (Male)

### **Location of Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- Cadets indicated that the dormitory is the most likely location for USC to occur.
  - “Probably the dorm rooms. There have been a couple of incidents of people getting caught behind closed doors.” (Male)
  - “Well, I guess it’s just because we all live together. And we’ve heard that most of the times when you’re sexually assaulted, it’s someone that you know; so if you’ve made friends with a guy. We’re allowed to be behind closed doors together; so that’s probably why it happens, just because you’re behind closed doors.” (Female)
  - “It’s always based on the amount of time you spend in the dorm rooms.” (Male)



- Cadets also indicated that it is hard to understand how USC could occur in the dorm without someone knowing.
  - “I can't sleep sometimes because I hear my next-door neighbors talking. It boggles me; that you'd have to be silent as can be for no one to even notice that it was going on nearby. It seems to me our environment would be so easy to get any of a dozen people to help you out if this is occurring.” (Male)
- Cadets do not think USC is likely to occur on official trips.
  - “Most sports team trips are only one sex, so I wouldn't think it would occur very much.” (Female)
  - “In the hotel rooms [on a sports trip], if I were to go in a guy's room, the door has to be propped open, and so we have rules to regulate that. We also go on spring break with each other, and the same rules apply. And I've honestly never had any problems or issues with that.” (Female)
  - “I'm on a team, and when we travel we have an officer with us. They supervise. There's ways to just leave, but they make sure you can't drink. Even if the upper classmen wanted to drink at the banquet, they have to get approval, even if they want to have one or two drinks. I know our officers are pretty strict about it. But I know other teams, they could care less, and they go out. Depends on the team, I think. Or not the team, but the supervisors.” (Female)
- Cadets indicated that there are other locations where USC might occur.
  - “A lot of the freshmen do that kind of stuff on the weekends [find rooms in the Academy buildings], because you can't go off base.” (Male)
  - “The Athletic Center is usually closed on the weekends. Not for the whole weekend. But at night, when something like that would happen, they're closed.” (Male)
  - “We've heard of problems with empty rooms, too. We've heard of stuff happening with those in squads. There are empty doom rooms, also multiple squads. Each squad has academic rooms too, so I've heard of stuff happening there.” (Male)

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to provide occasional surveillance of facilities after hours by security police or permanent party staff that might discourage use of empty rooms.

- Cadets indicated that, except for freshman training, there is less oversight on campus during summer.
  - “*I know during the summer training, there's less oversight from permanent party, and that's often well received. When we're in the dorms, our AOCs [Air Officer Commanding] aren't there, for example. We're not living in squadrons. I can see that as being a more risky environment.*” (Male)
  - “*One of the big differences for sophomores in training is they do survival training. So if you're out in the woods, sleeping on the ground, and there are girls in your group....*” (Male)
- Cadets indicated alcohol is a contributing factor in most USC.
  - “*Most of the time there's alcohol involved. Most of the time it's a party scene, college scene, bars. That's most of the time where you see it. People coming back from Hap's [on campus bar] or off base – it can happen here. It can happen any time.*” (Male)
  - “*I know of some where a guy comes back from drinking and he'll text a girl to come over, and they go over and hang out with him. And it happens.*” (Female)
  - “*You're trying to help him out because he's so incapacitated. Like, I'll be responsible for him, in a sense. They don't really know what they're doing half the time. So sometimes things can happen that way.*” (Female)
  - “*When you a designated driver, you're responsible for them, so you stay in the situation longer than you normally would. I feel like that's when it happens. From my experience, I've never seen it where it's like the guy has a malicious intent. It just happens, usually with alcohol, things like that.*” (Female)
- Cadets did not have any specific suggestions for changing alcohol policies to reduce USC.
  - “*I think they're pretty strict already [alcohol policies].*” (Male)
  - “*I'm not sure what you could do to change the alcohol policy.*” (Male)
- Cadets do not think drugs appear to contribute to USC.
  - “*Everyone is afraid of being drug tested, so I don't feel like drugs are an issue.*” (Female)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist to provide greater physical presence by permanent party staff during summer sessions to help continue the emphasis on prevention.</li> <li>◆ Another opportunity might exist to set expectations before summer training that professional behavior is the norm no matter the setting – establish a culture of accountability.</li> </ul>

- Cadets offered a number of suggestions for making their living environment safer.

- “We’re supposed to lock our doors at night, too, after taps, but that doesn’t always happen. I’ve heard of incidents happening because people didn’t lock their doors.” (Male)
- “After taps, they forget to lock their door. That’s a mistake people make all the time.” (Female)
- “A lot of girls don’t lock their doors, and people just bust in. It may be before taps too. So we’re not supposed to lock our doors.” (Female)
- “I know I’m on a sports team, and sometimes I get back really late from trips, and they drop us off in an area, and I have to walk pretty far to my dorm at 2:00 in the morning. And it’s really dark and there’s no one around. I feel unsafe then. I’ll be the only one that has to do it. Other people live in different dorms. The bus drivers won’t drive the extra space to go drop us off sometimes.” (Female)
- “From the side of Sijan Hall to the cadet clinic is like pitch black and scary and I always freak out. You have to go by the loading dock, by the parking lot and everything. I’m not saying they’re all like psycho rapists or anything, but it’s just like they’re not people that you know and see on a daily basis. So it’s just scary to walk in that pitch black area.” (Female)

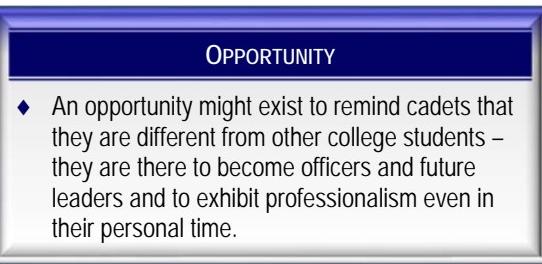
- Some cadets indicated that not much more can be done to make things safer.

- “These are the decisions made by people who are making poor choices to do that, and it’s not the policies, it’s not USAFA. It’s nothing, like, breeding this culture. It’s a couple of bad individuals who are making bad choices. I don’t think alcohol policies, locking your door, none of that should have an effect on whether someone decides to sexually assault someone.” (Male)
- “I don’t think that [changing alcohol policies] would change anything. People can still drink in their cars, going off base. That’s not going to change anything. At least here we have Hap’s. It’s contained, nobody’s driving. It’s like babysitting.” (Male)

OPPORTUNITY
◆ An opportunity might exist to remind cadets that the simple action of locking their dorm door can be an effective deterrent to situations – an effective action to increase one’s personal safety.
◆ Another opportunity might exist for Academy officials to consider establishing a working group (including cadets) to evaluate other safeguards such as increased lighting around campus, placement of emergency callboxes, on-call transportation for cadets returning at odd hours from trips, etc.

### **Time When Incidents Occur**

- Cadets behave differently after the duty day is over.
  - *“Most of the results you’re going to get for that are going to be after taps, or definitely after the duty day.”* (Male)



### **Multiple Incidents of Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- Cadets shared different perceptions on multiple incidents of USC being related to multiple offenders versus the same offender.
  - *“I think it would be most likely that it would happen with probably the same individual [offender] rather than three different people.”* (Male)
  - *“I feel that’s hard to gauge just because one instance could be one individual who we you know does it and then figures that he doesn’t get caught, so he gains more confidence and tries to go further the next time. And the more he does it and doesn’t get caught, he gets more comfortable with it, but at the same time, it could also be just a lot of people.”* (Male)
  - *“I think most of the people who said they experienced multiple, it happens in the same occasion, where there’s something early on in the day maybe and then later on at night. Or maybe it’s repeated attempts by the same person.”* (Male)
- Cadets indicated that sharing information about multiple offenses would be good.
  - *“I think that’s a good idea. I don’t think that’s something we ever talk about. We have a lot of sexual assault briefings, but they don’t mention that a lot, where if you report it in the early stages, maybe that will stop the activity [of someone else experiencing unwanted sexual contact].”* (Male)
- Some female cadets indicated that some offenders learn they can get away with certain behaviors.
  - *“I think it’s definitely an Air Force culture, that if you commit one of these crimes, you’re not going to get punished with it. And even if you are turned in, you won’t get a full punishment, especially here recently with the news about Colonel Wilkinson. He was found guilty of sexual assault, and the general just wiped it from his record. It’s things like that that deter people from turning people in in the first place.”* (Female)

- “*I definitely think that doing it multiple times would be as a result of not getting in trouble for it the first time around.*” (Female)
  - “*Especially with alcohol, it's kind of a one-time deal. You don't realize you did it. But if you do it when you're sober, then that's something of a personality trait. And once you realize you can do it once, who is to say you can't do it again? Who is to say you can't do it to other people? It's unfortunate, but that's why it's really important to report even unrestricted. Because especially if there wasn't alcohol involved, that person may be doing it to other people too.*” (Female)
- **Some cadets indicated that there is a general belief that an offender would be punished if caught.**
  - “*I feel there's a very clear environment that if I was accused of that, it would be pretty career ruining, at the very least. So I think there's definitely the possibility for retribution if anyone spoke up.*” (Male)
  - “*Probably because it didn't get reported, I would say. I have yet to hear of a case where someone did something like that and didn't get punished.*” (Male)
  - “*If you sexually assault someone, you're going to get in trouble and you're going to get a punishment. That's what happens. At least that's what I've heard, and that's what's been put out there.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that poor judgment is a personality characteristic that can lead to improper behavior.**
  - “*Internal character and how they are raised. If someone is raised that way, there's not very much training you can do to try to change their outlook on how they view women and how they view others. If they're raised that this is all right, that's going to be in their character. We could do all the training in the world, but it's pretty hard to change someone's internal values and internal core. I've seen the Academy try to change people's values. With freshmen, we try to develop them this way, but they're still going to lie about stuff. They're still going to go back to what their original character was.*” (Male)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist to share the finding that many victims of USC experience multiple incidents. Sharing this information with cadets may emphasize that reporting can lead to a significant reduction in unwanted behaviors.</li> </ul>

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist to continue demonstrating that sexual assault offenses are dealt with seriously by sharing results of investigations and adjudications, especially for incoming classes who might not know of any specific cases yet.</li> <li>◆ Another opportunity might exist for the Academy to consider additional anonymous “hotlines” for identifying offenders or establishing a “whistleblower” policy to protect the identity of someone who helps identify offenders.</li> </ul>

- “Whenever I hear about these cases, I think about what I would have done personally, and I always think about physical intervention. I can't think of a way to talk people out of it. You can't do this. I'll just physically stop them, or I'm going to have to physically take them down. I can't think that talking to them is going to change. Just get them out.” (Male)
- Cadets indicated that some offenders are persistent, especially if they do not receive strong signals to stop.
  - “If they're able to get away with it without a comment, then they'll keep pushing the boundary.” (Female)
  - “They might not show well enough that it is unwanted. So they might not want it in their heart and in their mind, but they don't really show it enough, so the guy is like, ‘Maybe I can go a little further.’” (Male)
- Cadets are often reluctant to turn in a fellow cadet due to the severe punishment for the offender.
  - “The punishment of turning someone in is so extreme. If you were to turn someone in for touching your butt, they could honestly be sitting in confinement for the rest of the year. That's a huge punishment for probably not that big of a crime. But if you don't stop it, then it escalates. So it's a huge Catch-22, actually.” (Female)
  - “If most cases of sexual harassment or assault are with people that you know, you probably care about them. And the punishment is so severe here – why would you do that for something that's not that big of a deal to you? But then it could become a big deal.” (Female)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to educate cadets that they are not the first, nor likely the last victim. This might serve as a motivator for coming forward.
- ◆ Another opportunity might exist to allow cadets to talk a situation over with an authority (AOCs, AMTs, coaches, etc.) without initiating a formal report, so that some incidents could be dealt with less severely.

### **Sexting, Pornography, Flirting, and Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- Cadets indicated that certain behaviors might contribute to different expectations about relationships.
  - “I definitely think at times it's a two-way street, that a guy might feel like he can push the limits if a girl has been acting a certain way towards him or has been flirty or they've been texting a lot, or sexting. And then when they meet in person, especially if there's alcohol involved, that situation can probably escalate quickly because he thinks or she thinks that they have established this relationship where they can do these things. We have to be aware if we are leading someone on, and

*if we don't want be leading someone on or have them have that perception about us, or that expectation, we have to make that very clear.”* (Female)

- “*I think girls, tying into our little animosity, we kind of are invisible. We do that for attention [flirt]. Then once we get attention, we realize it's not the attention we wanted. We just wanted them to like, Hey, I'm here. I'm a girl. Then you're actually faced with that, and I didn't want it. I just wanted to be noticed.”* (Female)
- **Cadets had mixed perceptions about pornography and USC.**
  - “*I would say if it is being used, then somebody else could transfer the fantasy of pornography into real life, especially when alcohol is involved. They lose some of the inhibitions that separate the two. They transfer those fantasies and that figures into why sexual harassment occurs.”* (Male)
  - “*I can't think of anybody that I've ever even heard rumored to be looking at pornography. I can't think of anything.”* (Female)
  - “*It's hard to say. A lot of that stuff is really private to people. They're not usually going to come out and tell people what they're doing, if it's related to that.”* (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that the social dynamics and rules regarding use of government computers at the Academy might be different than other schools.**
  - “*I think it's hard for guys here. We're not allowed to look at it on governmental laptops, so if they do look at it, they get in trouble. I don't know much about the whole sexting thing, but I'm sure it happens because that's the day and age we live in. We live in separate squadrons and we all have a lot of homework to do, and it takes a long time, so texting is probably easier than having a relationship here. I think it's definitely different than a normal college because they make it a little bit harder to get ahold of that stuff.”* (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that the Air Force has placed emphasis on sexual assault issues recently.**
  - “*I know that General Welsh [Air Force Chief of Staff] is trying to crack down a lot on crude behavior and crude items in the workplace. That's a big emphasis item for this year. We had inspections and stuff at the beginning of the year. Sitting up on your desk might be offensive to some people. They are trying to work on cracking down on that stuff.”* (Male)

### ***Sexual Harassment and Sexist Behavior***

This major section of the focus groups posed a hypothesis about the relationship of verbally offensive behaviors, such as sexual harassment and sexist comments, on USC. The facilitator began similar to the first section of the focus groups by sharing results from the 2012

*SAGR* on rates of sexual harassment and sexist behavior at the Academy over the past four surveys and hearing cadets' reactions. Cadets also provided thoughts on the subjective nature of these behaviors and why they are offensive to some and not to others. The facilitator then gave additional findings based on *2012 SAGR* that those men and women who experienced USC in the past year also tended to experience sexual harassment and sexist behavior at higher rates. Cadets commented on the possible relationships among these unwanted gender-related behaviors and what the impact might be of addressing the verbal behaviors and possibly reducing USC. Following up, the facilitator asked if cultural factors, such as attitudes of disrespect toward women, contributed to USC. This section ended with a discussion of recommendations for decreasing sexual harassment and sexist behavior.

### ***Familiarity with Incidence Rates from 2012 SAGR***

- **Focus group participants had mixed reactions to the incidence rates of sexual harassment and sexist behavior.**
  - “*I think everybody here knows at least one of those guys. You've met one on at least one occasion who displays that behavior. There's always that one guy.*” (Female)
  - “*Especially for men. I feel like that number is way too low, just thinking of how guys mess with each other. I feel like that number is way too low.*” (Female)
  - “*I think these are really subjective. I think something can be really offensive to somebody else and be not offensive at all to me. So it's hard to say.*” (Female)
  - “*I feel like they're high on both sides. I know people said that's what happened, but I have a really hard time believing that. For four years, I've never heard someone say that guys are better than girls. I just have a hard time believing that's really accurate.*” (Female)
- **Some cadets are more willing to confront offensive behavior than others.**
  - “*It depends on the person. Some girls are quieter. And I know if somebody says something like that to me, I'd look at them like, seriously? Excuse me? You have no right to talk to me like that. But some girls will let it eat them inside. It depends.*” (Female)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ An opportunity might exist to facilitate open discussions in mixed-gender groups to help cadets appreciate when comments and behaviors “cross the line.” Discussions could also help cadets develop techniques for dealing with people who express different values and attitudes.</li><li>◆ Another opportunity might exist to demonstrate that even “below the line” comments can be used as tests for more serious comments or actions – and that confrontation is harder if less serious comments are tolerated.</li></ul>

- “*Some girls might be more tolerant with sexist behavior than other girls. What a guy might say around his really good girl friend, he can normally say things around her that he might not be able to say around other people.*” (Female)
- **Most cadets will stop offensive behavior when asked or confronted**
  - “*They don't really realize what they're saying. And a lot of times I'll be like, 'Hey, whoa, you crossed the line.' They'll be like, 'Oh, I didn't even realize that.' In the experience I've had, they don't mean to be mean or malicious. They just don't realize it.*” (Female)
  - “*If any of us really saw something happening, and we knew it was in that situation, that most of us would step in. I just think that most of us don't see it because it normally happens behind closed doors, late at night.*” (Male)
- **Some cadets become desensitized to negative/unwanted comments.**
  - “*A lot of them [males] just talk a lot. A lot of them aren't purposely derogatory. That should be distinguished. There are some who are really demeaning. There are some people who joke about it. That happens all the time. It numbs you. It's not that offensive to me anymore. Then there are people who are really cruel about it. I'm better than you. You don't deserve to be here. That should be distinguished.*” (Female)
  - “*I don't want to sound insensitive, but my gut reaction on this is that people are just being way too sensitive. They're way too high.*” (Female)
- **Many cadets do not intentionally make offensive comments.**
  - “*The vast majority of this, I think, would be totally unintentional and unaware that the female is perceiving it to be sexual harassment.*” (Male)
  - “*Girls at our breakfast table take it so personal. I'm a guy and I'm with my friends, and this is a majority guy school and this is how we talk. And this one particular girl takes everything me and my friends say really personal. I would be interested to see what she would answer on this. She just leaves. It's not directed to her.*

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to emphasize that becoming desensitized to negative comments might perpetuate the problem.
- ◆ If the goal is to instill professional behavior within the cadet wing, then confrontation should be encouraged.

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ Many cadets seem to be unaware when their comments are perceived as offensive.
- ◆ An opportunity might exist to emphasize that if cadets adopt a more professional attitude when it comes to unwanted gender-related comments, people who exhibit improper attitudes and behaviors would more clearly stand out against that backdrop.

*But she does take it personally when we're talking about women in general. It's just guy talk." (Male)*

- “*Another thing I would say is when you go through basic training with these girls, you start to look at them more as one of the guys and not a girl. So you censor yourself less around the girls that you go through basic training with. So that could be misconstrued as sexual harassment or whatever.” (Male)*
- “*The type of environment that this place fosters. Every cadet is an athlete, so that 'locker room talk' is really common. Because guys being guys, there's a lot of testosterone floating around here. Sometimes we do forget, and it overlaps into places where it shouldn't.” (Male)*
- “*That sounds about like what I would expect. The guys here outnumber the females pretty heavily, and so it's really a more largely male culture than a regular culture. So guys in conversation just say things to one another that maybe they don't mean but – just because they're guys.” (Male)*
- **Whether a cadet finds a comment offensive depends on the setting and nature of the comment.**

— “*I feel it's really hard to make a distinction because we work with our friends here. So I've been sitting around with my friends, and they'll make some jokes. And, yeah, it's offensive. But at the same time, I know it's not intended to be that way, and it's not directed towards me in any way. In an official capacity, I feel like it would be a lot more unacceptable. That is something I would be more likely to report, as opposed to hanging out in my friend's room and they're messing around.” (Female)*

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to remind cadets that, as professionals in training, they are in an official capacity to curb their own inappropriate comments and call others out on theirs.
- ◆ Another opportunity might exist to instill in cadets that the same sense of professional behavior is expected of them after duty hours as during the day.
- ◆ A third opportunity might exist to facilitate discussions of the relationship of unwanted gender-related behaviors and sexist comments to more aggressive unwanted sexual behaviors to increase awareness of the need for civility and respect no matter the context.

- “*So it's not so much personal, I think, as it is just knowing what environment you're in.” (Female)*
- “*I think it just depends on the individual. You could say one thing in front of one person and they wouldn't have a problem with it, and you could say the exact same thing in front of someone else....” (Male)*

### **Relationship to Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- Cadets indicated that sexist comments or sexual harassment might lead to USC.

- “*They'll get bored of it after a while. They'll get bored of their comments. And then they'll move on to something else that emboldens them more or gives them more sense of satisfaction or whatever, and then they'll do something else. And then it just escalates.*” (Male)
- “*I think it would have to be something with maybe that individual tolerating it and maybe not showing that she or he was opposed to it. It seems to escalate. And then one guy sees it happening, she seems to take a sexist joke well, so like she doesn't care, he does that.*  
*Someone else does that. Next time he sees her, maybe he touches her in a way that he shouldn't. It's partly her or his responsibility to say, ‘Hey, Stop that. I don't appreciate that joke.’*” (Male)
- “*I know we just had a sexual assault briefing for commissioning education a few weeks ago. One of the things that our briefer brought up was that a lot of the time, especially those that have previously sexually assaulted people, they use this technique where they will make sexist remarks and stuff like that to desensitize the victim. If they're not going to stop me here, maybe I can push a little further. I think if people do a better job of maybe stopping just the sexist behavior as rude and saying, ‘Hey, I don't appreciate that,’ I think that will help in general with it progressing farther.*” (Male)
- “*I think one would precede the other, that someone might be shocked if they were to be immediately sexually assaulted before harassed, someone is going to want to ease into that.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that whether or not sexual harassment escalates into USC depends on circumstances and intent.**
  - “*I think it also shows how people test the waters, like, ‘Okay, I'm going to say this joke, and let's see how they react to it.’ They're not offended. I'm going to go a little bit further. So if you get rid of the sexist behavior, I think you could get rid of a lot of the deeper and worse offenses.*” (Female)
  - “*If somebody is going to be harassing you, then that's a situation where it would escalate to the unwanted sexual contact. But if it's one of those one time things that your friend has been drinking, then no, I don't think that harassment necessarily leads to it. Or the person keeps asking to establish a sexual relationship. They keep asking you out, and you just keep turning them down. Eventually, I feel like if the person has that type of personally, they're going to take advantage. Oh, well, you kept turning me down, I'll just go ahead and take*

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to educate cadets on the potential relationships between sexist comments, sexual harassment, and USC, substantiated by findings from the survey that verbal behaviors often accompany USC.
- ◆ Another opportunity might exist to highlight the impact inappropriate comments can have on people – being sensitive to inappropriate comments is a sign of responsible behavior.

*what I want. I've never seen that, but that would make sense to me. I think that's how that would escalate.”* (Female)

- “*These are all individuals and what they view as sexual harassment and what they view as sexual assault. And so I feel like it only makes sense if someone who considers a lot of things to be sexual harassment would also consider something to be sexual assault, that someone else might not think is sexual assault. They may be more sensitive. And maybe they just have certain beliefs that other people don't have. Maybe they value other things differently. But to me, it only makes sense that if they think a lot of things are sexual harassment, then there's a likely chance that they would consider other acts as sexual assault.*” (Male)
- “*With sexual harassment, there are a lot of things people will say to me that I personally don't find offensive because I know the person and I know they're just messing around with me. But if it was someone I didn't know and they said that to me, that is something I probably would report because it would be completely not acceptable within that context. A lot of it is contextual. How do you know the person? What's the situation? Do you feel comfortable with that person? Do they know their boundaries with you? A lot of that plays into whether or not I would consider it sexual harassment or not. Just because you can get someone in trouble for something, it doesn't mean you should. It's a really fine line, and it's hard to try and cut down on sexual harassment.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that addressing sexual harassment might create an atmosphere of respect where USC would be less likely to occur.**
  - “*The squad is supposed to be like your family. So you really don't want to get someone in trouble in your squad, because no one can trust you anymore. I think typically what will happen is somebody will say something in their squad and no one will trust them after that. So I think if you focused on creating an atmosphere of respect, especially in the squadrons, it would help to foster an environment where people weren't harassing other people, it wouldn't happen in the first place, rather than have that uncomfortable situation after to deal with.*” (Male)
- **Cadets noted that reducing sexual harassment and sexist behavior might not have much impact on reducing USC.**
  - “*I don't think so much the sexist behavior. I don't think there's much of a viable correlation. There are people who sexually harass a group and then don't cross a line into assault. But it would be difficult to find out if they're connected.*” (Female)
  - “*I think sexual harassment happens more in a group scenario. If you're out drinking with a bunch of guys and you're one of a few girls, there might be a lot of sexual harassment. And then when you go back to school, then one of them gets you alone and then the other stuff happens.*” (Female)

- “*You can try to create this structure or whatever as much as you want. It's still going to happen because it's ultimately an individual's choice to do something.*” (Male)
- “*I think they might not always correlate because a lot of the people who are going to be tagged under this sexual harassment would never sexually assault another person. Because I think a lot of these sexual harassments could be just, I was in the moment of bad taste rather than I have a rotten character and I would do something else.*” (Male)
- Cadets indicated reasons why sexual harassment and sexist behavior have not gone down in recent years, even with all the emphasis.
  - “*It happens at other universities too. It's not like we're doing something wrong, in terms of we have more sexual harassment or we have more sexist behavior. It's probably we are just more accused of it because we have a lot of focus groups, we are in the military and we represent the county, and we're in the news a lot. But I feel if you take these numbers, we are probably considerably less than a large university, and we probably have a better system for dealing with it and preventing it and things like that. In the grand scheme of things, compared to other people our age or other college students across the county, that may be a very tiny amount compared to other schools. It's hard to keep it in perspective.*” (Female)
  - “*The Academy is so diverse. Because I'm from the North, and the guys from the South think it's okay to tell a woman that they should go on in the kitchen. I think that's a norm in the South. Where in the North, I had never experienced that before. So I think that can cause conflict too.*” (Female)
  - “*Honestly, I don't think there's anything that anybody can put in place, any program people can put in place to decrease the number. It's just one of those things where it's going to happen, and all you can do is take care of the people that it happens to.*” (Male)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to emphasize that the consequences of improper behavior are far more consequential in the military than at other universities – ultimately mission effectiveness is affected when someone does not feel accepted or safe from their own unit members.
- ◆ Another opportunity might exist to educate each incoming class early on acceptable standards – made most effective by upperclassmen leading the discussions and modeling appropriate attitudes and behavior.

### Attitudes of Disrespect

- When asked if attitudes of disrespect toward women at the academy contribute to sexual assault or unwanted gender behaviors, no participant indicated experiencing such a connection, but disrespect does occur.

- “*I think you inherently find that in all parts of the military. I think that's inevitable.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that some attitudes of disrespect originate from the way men view female cadets.**
  - “*Females here are treated differently than civilian girls. They're like sisters or just they're there. If someone is making a joke about 'Don't get with cadet girls, they're not real girls,' stuff like that. So I can see that being a problem with our culture here.*” (Male)
- **Others cadets indicated they have not experienced disrespect.**
  - “*On the whole, I don't feel disrespected in any way. I feel like there are those few people out there.*” (Female)
  - “*We warn each other if that guy's a jerk. Like I said, it's not a culture. It's just individuals.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that the ratio of men to women in the military might have an effect on attitudes of disrespect.**
  - “*When you enter into a place with 80 percent male and 20 percent female, you have to realize that things are going to happen more often than they do out in the real world. That's a statistics thing. It's not anything against military men. You have people 18 to 24 or 25, or whatever, and it's going to happen.*” (Female)
  - “*We live in a male-dominated culture here. For the women's forums that we have to go to, I don't think the boys understand it at all. It doesn't create a culture here of unity. You're separating the two sexes. We get treated differently, so you can't really fix it.*” (Female)
  - “*I think it's not so much of an Air Force culture but a society culture as well. Male dominated fields, careers. There's more emphasis on more women in those fields, and I completely agree with that, but the society norm sets that. You play like a girl, something as small as that. When they said that women can be on the front line now, if they can meet the physical norms of that, the norms of physical testing and so forth. Like she said, there is a cultural divide of what men are expected to do and women are expected to do. And as a result of that, it just happens. It's not so much you're cognizant of it when you say it. So I expect it to be that high, if not higher. I don't see it going down for a long time.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that disrespect is a function of individual personalities.**
  - “*I don't think it's a culture here. I think it's individual people who don't either respect the people that they work with it or it's just something that they don't think is a big deal. I don't think it's a failure at any point or any one point in the*

*Academy system. I think it's just people are going to do what people do.”*  
(Female)

- “*There's also the aspect of, for example, a rejected guy is, I'm tempted to say a million times more likely to blame the girl than his own physical or emotional and mental inadequacies.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that unequal standards play a role in attitudes.**
  - “*I think you want equal treatment, yet you have unequal standards.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that female cadets are viewed as equals.**
  - “*Well, they know when they're coming here that they're going to be outnumbered heavily at the school. I don't think that's around so much anymore because girls are now in positions of power here, so it's not like it is sexist when it comes to leadership or anything like that. So I think the idea that women still have to earn their keep here is kind of gone. They're viewed pretty much as equals around here.*” (Male)

### **Cadet Recommendations**

- **Continue with the progress that has been made.**
  - “*I feel like no matter what you do, it's not going to stop it. You can talk about it and you can try and tell us to act more like officers; but in reality, that's just where our hormones are in our life. And we like girls. Especially with the type of personalities that this place brings in, it's the Type A guys, the real go-getters, and they get what they want. And I guess sometimes it goes too far with the girls.*” (Male)
  - “*I feel like at this point they're doing everything they can, minus having a personal camera on us at all times, that kind of thing. The SARC briefings have gotten way more impactful. It's not this generic term. They're starting to talk to cadets that have been involved, themselves have been violated or been bystanders or seen the situation. I honestly think the SARC program has taken off. It's completely different than when we arrived freshman year. I think it hits home with people way more. Because I know in the briefings, a lot of them think of us as their little sisters and they protect us. When they see one of us has specifically gotten hurt, it hits home way more for them than when it's just some random story.*” (Female)
  - “*I feel like we're doing everything there is. Girls have to be together in the squadron. They're not allowed to be in a room. They're not allowed to walk past a guy's room to get to the bathroom. We have all of those rules.*” (Female)

- “*So I feel, really, there's nothing more that you could do. Prevention can only go so far. It comes down to the quality and character of the people that are involved.*” (Female)
- **Remind cadets that they can take action to stop unwanted behaviors.**
  - “*You're not going to be able to necessarily stop one individual who's intent on doing it. I think one of the best things you can do is try to emphasize seeking help or stopping it. Because we do it in an environment that it's easy to stop any unwanted assault because there are so many people nearby who are always looking out for you. So if people were more conscious and aware of getting help if something bad is happening.*” (Male)
- “*I have an example that I've seen close up. They're two roommates, both girls, and one is pretty vocal and calls things out as soon as they happen. Somebody said a sexist joke to her, and she grilled him pretty hard. That was one of the last times I've ever seen that happen. Her roommate, on the other hand, is pretty docile and she gets constantly heckled all the time. She always comes back complaining about ‘This guy hasn't been nice to the females.’*” (Male)
- **Provide more outlets for students to develop social skills.**
  - “*We're not allowed out as much as we would like, especially in this time of our lives. I'm not saying they should encourage us to go to other schools and go party, but just more freedom on the weekends, or have girls from other colleges come up here or something. Just have more social interactions with people outside of this place.*” (Male)
  - “*That's a big problem here. People here are socially challenged. And that's a fact that everyone can agree to.*” (Male)
- **Engage cadets to affect a change in culture.**
  - “*I think upper classmen could influence it if they wanted to influence it. But if it's mandated, it's just going to become a joke. If you try to mandate it, it's going to go completely the opposite way and it's going to get worse. Trying to mandate it from the top never really helps. They have to decide that they want it to change before it's going to change.*” (Female)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to instill a cultural norm that as an officer it is acceptable and expected to stand up for one's rights and beliefs.
- ◆ Leadership at all levels, including cadet, should be encouraged to reinforce instances where someone stood up to an offensive situation.

- **Address inappropriate social behaviors.**
  - “*Maybe address some social behaviors. A lot of people come here and they have been home schooled or they haven't really been out in the real world, so to speak. I feel like some people just don't know how to act or don't know the boundaries. Oh, I can text her even if she's not texting me back, things like that. It's just weird how people think what's okay is actually not okay, but they just haven't been brought up in a way that tells them otherwise. Not necessarily training. We already have the formal decorum training, but I feel like it doesn't really push into that. I don't even know how you could address it.*” (Male)
  - “*A lot of them tell us what not to do. Very few of them tell us what we should do, like how we should act. There are a lot of people that have never been in that situation before. They can use that. You should be told how to go about things instead of what not to do.*” (Male)

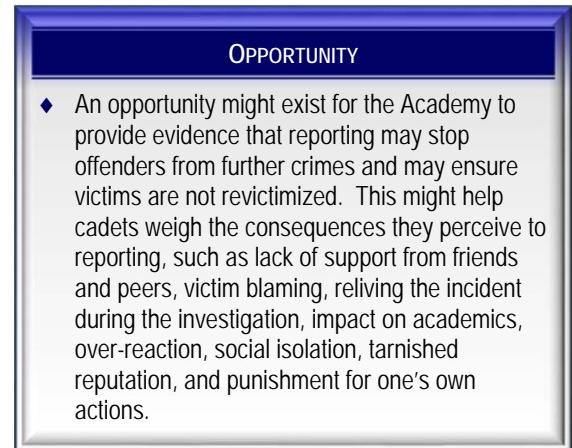
### **Reporting**

The purpose of this section was to gain additional understanding of why, even with all of the emphasis on USC and zero tolerance, cadets are still reluctant to report their experiences. Cadets offered a number of potential reasons, especially the perceived repercussions from reporting. The section ended with cadets providing recommendations to remove barriers to reporting.

#### **Reasons for Not Reporting Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- **Cadets do not want to get the offender in trouble.**
  - “*Mostly when it happens, it's probably somebody you don't want to get in trouble. Well, he was my friend. He's got a high up position in my squadron. Everyone likes him. I even like him. It's like the whole alcohol hit thing. It's hard to turn your friends in.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated there are too many repercussions from reporting, such as lack of support from friends and peers, victim blaming, reliving the incident during the investigation, impact on academics, over-reaction, social isolation, and punishment for one's own actions.**
  - “*You see all the fallout from turning people in. You don't want that. There's somebody in my squad under investigation right now. It's horrible. We all hate it. And I think to some extent that keeps it from being reported.*” (Female)
  - “*Not their career but their social life [the victim's]. If you're assaulted, you feel alone. You don't have support. And as soon as you report and look for that support, everyone else that you live with, that you work with, that you eat with, that you work out with kind of turns their back on you.*” (Female)

- “Even though there's support and there's plenty of help and counseling for victims, it's still quite a big undertaking to relive every moment. The fact that the investigation process is so brutal. So, that would be a significant deterrent.” (Female)
- “I think there's also a stigma that could follow you. It's like you report something and he's not convicted, some people are going to think you're the girl who cries wolf all the time.” (Female)
- “There's the actual physical time that it takes, and then there's the emotional toll. After she has repeated her story, she can't go to class for three, four days sometimes because she's just in her room crying. And that's not something her teachers necessarily understand. And there are a lot of aspects here, in general, not just here that I think contribute to just not wanting to go through with a full report.” (Female)
- “Especially if you're under aged drinking. They'd care more about that you're under aged drinking than the fact that you got sexually assaulted.” (Female)
- “Even when we do report it, the punishment system here takes months. An issue happened last semester, and the guy was finally kicked out of here and brought up on charges three weeks ago. This happened early last semester and was carried on from freshman year. But the thing is, they should kick them out, get them out of here, and deal with them in another situation.” (Male)
- Cadets indicated that “Took care of it myself” has several aspects, including confronting the offender directly, assessing the risk of reporting as too great, concern about one's own behaviors as a factor in the USC, avoiding the offender, or handling the situation at the cadet-to-cadet level.
  - “They have that stat that the majority of sexual assaults happen with somebody you know. So it's probably like, ‘I felt like you sexually assaulted me. Don't let it happen again.’” (Male)
  - “It's almost the same way when people say they don't want to take people to court, the whole cycle of going through things and saying your story a million times. Sometimes people just don't want to go through it and just want to deal with it on their own.” (Male)



- “*We're always told to handle things at the lowest level. So if they feel like it could be handled just confronting the person and talking to the person: This is actually what happened and this is what could come of it, but we need to handle it between the two of us. So I think that would be, ‘I handled it myself.’”* (Female)
- “*Maybe they threatened the person. If you do anything or tell anyone, I will turn you in. I guess that's what I would do if I wasn't going to turn them in. Go tell them, I will tell on you if you don't stop.*” (Female)
- **For some cadets “Took care of it myself” might mean internalizing the situation and taking no action.**
  - “*Draw unwanted attention, depending on how they take it. Maybe deal with it personally, but they don't want to bring others into it. They don't want to let more people know about it outside of themselves.*” (Male)
  - “*I also think some people might deal with it by cutting the person out of their life, avoiding them as much as possible.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that protecting one's reputation is important.**
  - “*They're naturally judged if it's known to the public, you're actually judged for it. And the friends of the person who's being accused, they're going to assume that that person who's accusing is lying.*” (Male)
  - “*The girls-judging-girls thing, they go talk to a couple of their girlfriends about it. You were drinking and you invited him to your room. It's your fault. Don't say anything. The judging thing, I do think that is something that women definitely fear, and I think it's a legitimate fear. It's not really fair, but I do think it is a real thing.*” (Male)
  - “*Once something like that gets out, let's say it is a girl, they're usually labeled as that. So people usually don't know the whole story, but they still know that the girl reported it; so a lot of times people will talk about it and say, ‘Stay away from her.’”* (Male)

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to emphasize that the positive benefits of reporting could displace the negative aspects of reporting – that reporting might stop an offender from committing future offenses with someone else and it is the responsible thing to do.

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist for leadership to encourage mental fitness as an important factor in being successful in the Academy and Air Force – a cultural change that seeking help for stress is not different than seeking help with a physical problem.

- “*I'd be scared it could affect their cadet careers and their future careers in general. Even though it's not their fault, just the fact that it happened, whenever their name comes up, they'll automatically think about that incident. When they apply for certain jobs, instead of hearing them as any other candidate, having that incident may influence them positively or negatively.*” (Male)
- **Cadets are less inclined to report a same-gender offender.**
  - “*I think it depends on whether or not they're comfortable with that. So if a female who wasn't gay was getting unwanted sexual contact from another female, she's probably more likely to report it. But if she was comfortable with it or she knew them, ‘Oh, she's a good friend, I'll just tell her to back off. I don't know why she's flirting with me.’ Then she wouldn't say anything. She would take care of it herself, basically.*” (Female)
  - “*With guys, though, definitely less likely to report it [same gender offender].*” (Female)
  - “*I feel like it would be a lot more confusing, especially if you weren't expecting it or you didn't know that person was of that orientation. It would be a lot more confusing.*” (Female)
  - “*Because it is embarrassing to say, ‘This man did this to me.’ We want to be in control and everything, and to think that another man violated you and you could do nothing about it, that's really embarrassing.*” (Male)
- **Cadets deal with difficult situations differently.**
  - “*It's like having a death in your family. Everyone deals with that a little differently. It's a traumatic situation. Everyone is going to deal with it at their own rate. Honestly, I don't think it's a problem with the SARC system. I think it's just the victim's readiness to process.*” (Female)
  - “*I think ‘encourage’ is a bad word for it. If you try and encourage reporting, you're almost creating a culture of people that are almost overly sensitive to the topic, and I think you would see false reports and stuff go up. I think it has to stay the way it is. When you're ready, come talk to us. Everyone gets the training, everyone sees the training, and eventually when that person is ready, they will report.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that it might be less intimidating to indicate experiencing USC on the survey than actually making a report.**
  - “*I think some of the reasons people don't report is because when you report that entails a lot of extra questioning. And I don't want to talk about it, but I have to tell this person about it, and I don't want to do that. And even if it's restricted, you still have to tell a person. And with a survey, it's a piece of paper that you're*

*telling. It's not a person. You don't even have to think about it. You just have to circle yes or no.”* (Female)

- **Cadets have similar reasons for not reporting sexual harassment.**

- *“I feel like most people just try to deal with it on their own because it wouldn't seem like that big of a deal.”* (Female)

### **Cadet Recommendations**

- **Reduce the repercussions of reporting.**

- *“If the punishments weren't so awful – that's the perception here. If you report someone for anything sexual related, it's pretty much their career is over, they're getting kicked out. Or if they stay here, they've got this horrible stigma. And it may be something like, ‘Oh, well, he did something I didn't really want him to do.’ It's not like, ‘Oh, God, he threatened my life.’”* (Female)
  - *“We take it so seriously because we're in the military. If I had the choice, can I just deal with this and get over it and not put myself in that situation and deal with it on a personal level? I would rather do that than turn this person in, have it tear apart my squadron, have it ruin their career, possibly their life, et cetera. I would rather do that because I feel like it's either all or nothing when you report something.”* (Female)

- **Encourage earlier reporting to reduce unintended consequences.**

- *“It would be better if we pushed girls to report as soon as possible. ‘Oh, it didn't really happen.’ And then months later, they're like, ‘Actually, it did, and that wasn't okay.’ Or the longer it goes, the more exaggerated it goes. It's like it fishtails. If something happens, then you should report it. Or it should go to a peer [representative] immediately. It's more likely to be trusted, almost.*

*There are some girls who want to just do that to get back at somebody for doing something wrong. I think that's why the general guy population has such discontent towards women who report. And that's why there's such hostility when reporting is involved, is because are they really telling you the truth? He doesn't seem like that kind of guy. So she's obviously lying.”* (Female)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to provide cadets with additional resources to help them make the decision about reporting.
- ◆ An opportunity might also exist to evaluate the policies on who can take a restricted report of USC – current policies exclude many of the faculty and staff members who are closest to the cadets and might be a useful resource for seeking advice before making a report.

- **Provide better clarity on what is reportable.**
  - “A couple of freshmen reported a case of sexual harassment. Something happened where they couldn't classify it as sexual harassment because it wasn't directed at them. They're like, ‘Well, we can give him a Form 10 and a stern talking to, but we can't really give him punishment for sexual harassment because it isn't, really.’ There is a disconnect between what we're told is sexual harassment and then what the law says or how they prosecute it. [So greater clarity would help.]” (Female)
- **Emphasize professionalism and responsibility to help cadets think through reporting decisions.**
  - “Like what they do with an honor violation: Do you want this person in your Air Force? I think that would help to get people over the whole idea that they can be selfish and that it's okay. But put it in a non-selfish way, ‘Oh, this person could negatively affect this and the Air Force, and look at all the damage that this person could do if their behavior goes unchecked.’ I know they do that with honors.” (Female)
- **Emphasize zero tolerance as early as possible to deter some people from entering the Academy in the first place.**
  - “Making it more present, a higher issue for those who are coming in, immediately during the recruitment process. Make sure you voice how high of an emphasis it is, that could maybe deter some individuals from coming here altogether. General Welsh is saying it's zero tolerance now, and making sure that everyone knows that when they come in. I'm sure they could alleviate some of the individuals. It's more an individual that does it, from the experience I've heard in the recent sexual assault cases. So that would be a way to weed out some numbers.” (Male)
  - “We have to speak with the liaison officer, get interviewed before we get here. That could be a good opportunity, coming from a military person, as opposed to just in the paperwork, for them to discuss it. And if you have a problem with it [it might be a good time to reconsider].” (Male)
- **Share facts about sexual assault cases and outcomes to reduce rumors and repercussions from reporting.**
  - “It goes back to where if something happens, don't leave us in the dark to think something about something. Just come out and tell us. If it's in our squadron,

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to place early emphasis on being responsible and professional to help cadets confront offensive behaviors early on and report them if they decide to.

*have someone come in and say what happened, this is at least what's alleged to have happen, and this is how we're taking care of it. Knowing the facts would be helpful.” (Male)*

- “*You hear this person is being charged, and then it's brushed under the rug, forget about it. I don't think that's good. I think we need to emphasize what came out of it. Because that shows victims that haven't reported and victims that have reported that it's not a broken system, that it does work and that it's not going to be a waste of their time to report.*” (Female)

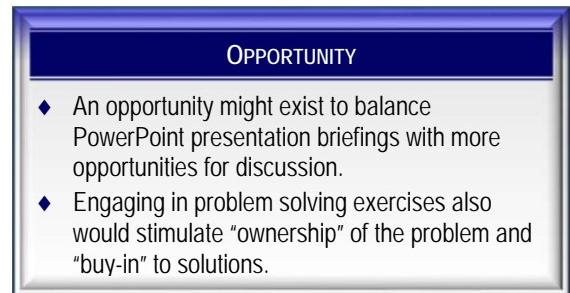
### ***Perceptions of Leadership***

Another major area for investigation in the 2013 SAGR focus groups centered on perceptions of leadership with respect to being engaged in preventing USC. The presumption is that programmatic aspects of sexual assault prevention and response are in place but require continual emphasis. Leadership at all levels is necessary to make programs maximally effective. Cadets were asked about the degree to which they interact with leadership on these issues, whether leaders react appropriately and lead by example, and what else leaders can do to help diminish USC.

### ***Interactions with Leadership on Gender-Related Topics***

- Cadets indicated that leadership clearly says they take gender-related issues seriously.
  - “*The first thing our permanent party said was, ‘We are always here for you in whatever situation.’ And honestly, I trust them enough for that.*” (Female)
  - “*There's an approachable permanent party. In that sense, if I went to my squad permanent party, I feel I would be taken seriously. There would be full confidentiality, that they would do the most to make the process easier on me, in my experience.*” (Female)
  - “*I think it's not something that they shrug off. They take time to look into it if they hear something.*” (Female)
  - “*Our squadron officer, when an incident happened, he took the girl aside and talked to her and said, ‘If anything happens like that, we don't have to go through our cadet chain of command.’ I think in that sense, they're trying to relieve the pressure of talking to people who are your peers and just go directly to officer leadership, where that can be handled on a different level, where you don't have to interact with people you might have to deal with on a daily basis.*” (Female)

- Cadets noted that most interactions with leadership about gender issues are at the group level.
  - “*They're mass briefings. I've never had a real, personal, one-on-one or closed group, not even a squadron level type talk.*” (Male)
  - “*We've had squadron level meetings. But, teachers teach and coaches coach, basically.*” (Male)
  - “*They'll give you the whole zero tolerance drill and you can't do it; and if you do do it, you're going to get hammered. It's extremely inefficient to go and sit down one by one with all 4,000 cadets and give them this 30 minute talk when most of the people that do it are going to do it anyway, regardless of what you say.*” (Male)
- Cadets indicated that senior leaders (above the squadron level) do not address gender-related topics directly.
  - “*They inform us about these cases. They tell us when there's an investigation going on and when things go to trial. But other than that, they don't really.*” (Female)
  - “*I feel like the only time we actually even talk about it is when they're telling us about a new case when it hits the press. General Lengyel [Commandant] goes on the staff tower at lunch saying, these people are being charged, or this person is being charged for this. They never talk to us about it other than that.*” (Female)
  - “*We never heard anything about it from leadership or anything. There was something that happened in our squadron. Everybody was really quiet about it. I went to one of the girls and asked. And she's like, 'Oh, we don't really talk about that.' That is what happened when I asked someone. We know it happened, but we don't know how it happened.*” (Female)
- Cadets indicated that some leaders are not approachable on gender-related issues.
  - “*Maybe it's this Academy, but we have almost an us-versus-them mentality with permanent party. For me, I honestly didn't like my AMT or my AOC all throughout my sophomore and junior year. I've just got cool with my AMT this year, to the point we can actually talk about things. Some people don't have that. They just go to their friends. Some people hate their AOCs, AMTs, teachers, whatever. And that may or may not affect reporting.*” (Male)
  - “*I think most of us have male AOCs, and that would be awkward.*” (Female)



- Cadets would be more comfortable going to leadership about gender-related issues if they could do so confidentially.
  - “SARC – you don't really know them. You get a briefing by them every so often. But your AOC, I would feel very comfortable with my AOC, and so if I was in that situation, I would feel more like I would be more protected if my commander knew than if some unknown entity that I never really interacted with knew.” (Female)
  - “I know in my squadron, our leadership talk to us about it. The only time we talk about it is when we get briefings from the SARC people. But I feel like that would be helpful, if our leadership sat down with us and said, ‘If anything happens, you can always tell us.’ Because the SARC people say, ‘You don't have to tell them. You can just tell us.’ But that would open up possibilities. If you told your leadership that something like that happened, that would be helpful.” (Female)
- Cadet leadership and upperclassmen can be influential in dealing with gender-related issues.
  - “Right before recognition, all of our upper classmen girls talked with the freshman girls and said, Watch out for the guys. There will always be a few that will put pressure on you. And you can always come to us if something happens. In our squad, upper classmen girls, I know a lot of them I can trust if something happens.” (Female)
  - “If I was going to be talked to more about it, I feel like it would be more helpful to have upper classmen, less than officers. Because when an officer is talking about it, it's more one way. But when your upper classmen are talking to you about it, they make it really clear, if we are actually offended by something, that we can come and talk to them. I feel like that's a better way of dealing with it than having my AOC say, ‘You need to come talk to me about it.’ Then you just end up getting someone in trouble. It's easier to deal with the person than it is through your AOC.” (Female)
  - “I feel like the upper classmen know more about it because they've probably witnessed more of it through their time at the Academy, where the AOCs and AMTs probably never observe the behavior happening. Because whenever permanent party is nearby, everyone is always on their best behavior here. So I

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to broaden the policy on who can take a restricted report, or at least give advice on reporting.

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to engage upperclassmen to carry the message of zero tolerance and lead by example.
- ◆ Senior leadership commitment is necessary, but cadet leadership commitment can be even more effective in modeling desired outcomes.

*feel like they don't have any personal experience with the cadet harassment.”*  
(Female)

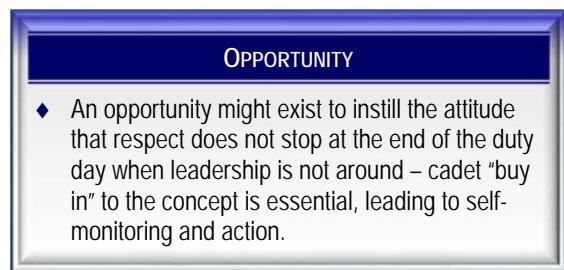
### **Leading by Example**

- Cadets indicated that leadership sets a good example.
  - “*They're all zero tolerance, it won't be tolerated. In three and a half years, I've never seen a permanent party member saying anything sexist or do anything sexist.*” (Male)
  - “*It's pretty professional.*” (Male)
  - “*I don't really see much happening in the classrooms, so I haven't seen them put in a situation where they needed to, personally.*” (Female)
  - “*I think everyone watches what they say when they're around their superiors.*” (Female)
- Cadets indicated that hearing directly from leadership on gender-related issues is helpful.
  - “*We watched a couple of those awkward videos about airmen working together and a couple people getting raped and then talked about how you could prevent this. We have a lot of them, so it wasn't like I learned anything crazy new. But it's nice hearing it from your AOC.*” (Female)
  - “[The Commandant] addressed the entire Cadet Wing. That was one of his major priorities. Clearly, we know that to upper leadership, it matters to them. And they address us personally. They do tell us.” (Female)
  - “*Our cadet leadership has brought it up during roll call, reiterating what the Commandant said. Normally, your first year, your squad commander says ‘My door is always open, if you need anyone to talk to.’ So they're trying to make themselves more approachable as someone who has a little more power.*” (Female)
- Cadets indicated that leadership would handle cases properly.
  - “*I think it depends on the situation. If it's a woman reporting to somebody in the squad, that probably would be a very trying situation for the AOC because there you have to be neutral. You're innocent until proven guilty. So probably very trying and difficult for the AOCs or AMTs if there's an assault case brought up. They usually handle it in a decent, respectful manner.*” (Female)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to encourage leaders at all levels to share with students how they react to and handle inappropriate situations.

- Cadets indicated that leadership would have difficulty with same-sex cases.
  - “I don't think they'd know how to react. I think the military as a whole is in limbo since Don't Ask, Don't Tell got repealed. Even though it's not a policy now, I feel like people are still pretty private about that kind of thing because they don't want to face the judgment or the persecution that they think they will from a majority of conservative group. I don't think they would know how to react. Because I feel like even though we know that it's okay and allowed, I still think that a majority of people don't think it regularly occurs.” (Female)
- Cadets noted that most interactions with leaders are during the duty day.
  - “More during the duty day.” (Male)
  - “It's nice to get a break from them, to be honest with you. You do see them every day for the majority of the day. So just to have personal time or time to be adults. To relax and know that we're not constantly under that microscope. We do have a little time where we can go hang out with our friends.” (Male)
  - “I'd say there's a change [in the way cadets act], but it's pretty small. Because during the day, we all have our own things to do in class and everything. But when I see my friends in the hallway, I don't act differently. I think that these things probably happen more during the evening because you don't have as many things to do, you don't have class to go to, and our AOCs/AMTs aren't there anymore.” (Female)
- Some cadets have noticed a change in culture at the Academy regarding gender-related issues.
  - “For example, during recognition this year, it's usually a tradition, at least in a lot of squadrons, right after the freshman get recognized or as they're getting recognized, as they walk down the hallway, all the upper classmen are around, for the guys they'll give them a slap on the ass for ‘Good game.’ And that was out this year.” (Male)
  - “I know some people in my squad thought they were just taking it too far, especially teammates. Hey, I slap this kid on the ass every day at practice. And we're friends; we know each other. And then you're telling me, in his biggest moment, I can't do it now? I know a lot of people are upset based on that. [But] if it has to be black and white, it's better to err on the safe side.” (Male)



## ***Training***

Training in sexual assault prevention and response is a recurring topic for surveys and focus groups. The facilitator started by asking cadets to describe the training they receive on these topics, how they perceive their training in reducing USC, and to give examples of the most effective training they have experienced. The section on training concluded with a discussion of recommendations for improvement.

### ***Training Received***

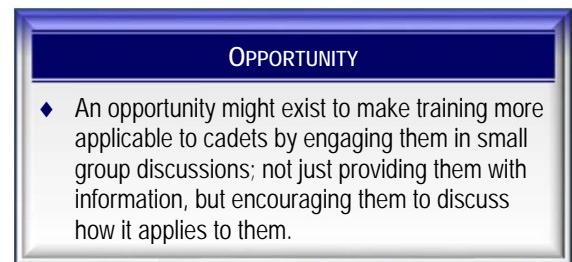
- **Cadets indicated that much of the sexual assault prevention and response training is repetitive.**
  - “*‘Oh, not another one of these.’ It will be the same one over and over again. I don’t like going to them because for most of us, this is common sense. But I guess for that one person that it isn’t common sense, it’s probably good that we have them every so often.*” (Female)
  - “*Because we have so many of them, we get numb to it. It’s terrible. But shock and awe is good for cadets. Because we get the same thing over and over again, it’s good to bring to light the severity of the particular topic. It’s serious.*” (Female)
  - “*SARC information is highly saturated here, almost too much. There are only so many times that you can explain to us the difference between restricted and unrestricted reporting and that the Air Force has a zero tolerance policy. Got it.*” (Female)
  - “*It’s not like you’re told about it freshman year and then it’s forgotten about. It’s reiterated to you over and over again. Sometimes you could say they’re beating a dead horse, but I think it needs to be reiterated so that people don’t forget the resources they have and the different options they have.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that the quality of sexual assault prevention and response training is varied.**
  - “*We get online training. Every now and then, we’ll have a briefing in our squadron. Our AOC will lead it. We’ll have a briefing in Arnold Hall, in the auditorium, with a thousand of us. Or we’ll have a test or a class. Our senior class, we’ll get 20 people and talk about it. And I don’t feel like there’s anything else you can do to educate people. I think we do a fairly good job.*” (Male)
  - “*All of our SARC briefings are separate. Guys are in one, and girls are in another. A lot of it is vilifying men as predators. They take it as a joke. ‘Well, we’re just men, so actually we’re going to commit sexual assault.’ What I’ve heard from the guys, they don’t take it very seriously because of the way it’s conveyed to them. I think to the girls it’s a little bit more like, ‘Make sure you’re aware of what’s happening.’*” (Female)

- “*I think it would be interesting to see a guy's actual perspective about it. You can joke about it, but you don't know what they would think about it. And I think they could benefit from hearing the girls' side of the story.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that some sexual assault prevention and response training is not very realistic.**
  - “*The least effective method is the online training. Typically how they funnel that out is at the end of a training weekend, before you can sign out, you have to finish the training. So most people would probably just click through it instead. It's all hypothetical. ‘Oh, Cadet So-and-So, Lieutenant So-and-So.’ It's not someone you can put a face to. It's just ‘Read this, read this.’*” (Male)
  - “*During the guy and the girl thing, it's okay to be a Charlie Bravo. It's okay to go grab your friend if you know she's going to make bad choices. But never really talked about prevention in dorms per se. Because if that stuff is happening, if I was going to try to do that with an upper classman, ‘Hey, I'm inviting so-and-so over to my room,’ and stuff like that.*” (Female)
  - “*I think they give us more a definition of what it is rather than ‘Here's the situation. Here's what you can do or not do,’ and things like that.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that the best sexual assault prevention and response training relates to life as a cadet.**
  - “*I would go back to the victim's video last spring semester. It was a cadet and she basically poured her heart out on video. And it was shown to every squadron, about her case and what happened here. It wasn't a cadet-on-cadet kind of deal, but I think that's the most effective training. Because when you make it an anonymous face or a faceless person, it's hard for people to really emotionally connect with it. Whereas I think that really hit home with a lot of people; that this is happening here and they're not just statistics. They're people I know. They're people I see on the terrazzo, they're people I see walking to class.*” (Female)
  - “*I think bringing in that lady who was an actual lawyer and deals with this stuff. We, as cadets, have more respect for someone who knows what they're talking about and can speak from experience. If you give us a real story that actually took place, not a made-up Cadet X random thing that isn't even believable. Hearing that kind of stuff gives us more of an idea of okay, this could happen here, this could happen there, to try to watch out for people.*” (Male)
  - “*I know last year we had people who were sexually assaulted or raped. They did an interview or something like that. It was real cadets telling real stories. That just makes it a lot more real. People you know, people you have class with, your squad mates just telling their stories.*” (Male)

- “I thought it was really effective when the victims made that video – I don't know if everyone saw it – about their personal experience and what they actually went through, because we never hear from them. And that was really effective because we got to see what they actually went through. And it cut out all the rumors because they told us, ‘This is what happened, and this is how we dealt with it, and this was the outcome.’ So I thought it was a really, really good move.” (Female)
- “I think making it more personal, like the videos did. So it was a pretty eye-opening experience. Make sure you have both sides of the situation, someone that actually went to prison or something like that, changed their ways, and talk about their experience of being the actual person who did it. And also get the victim, as well, to bring more discussion relating to it, rather than telling us, ‘Don't do this, don't do that.’ What maybe happened, this is some facts for some single case, instead of repetitive and boring and you dread going to the same thing every time. Bringing in the person, I think that would be pretty good.” (Male)
- “At this briefing that we had last week, the overall message was ‘Slut shaming is bad.’ Most people still don't understand the concept of slut shaming because they haven't had any women's issues courses at the Academy. I think general education on some of these topics would really go a long way. Because not only does it make people aware, but it makes people realize the secondary and tertiary effects of that sort of behavior. So coupled with the victims' stories, the personal stories, would be incredibly powerful.” (Female)

### **Cadet Recommendations**

- **Provide additional training on sexual assault response.**
  - “Let's have no more, but that's unrealistic. Let's help out the people that it happens to. A lot of people don't know what to do. What do I do? I don't know what to do, so I'm not going to do anything. If it was maybe a little bit more geared towards 50/50 or even let's try to prevent it from happening, be a good wing man; but if it does happen, this is what you can do.” (Female)
- **Provide more personalized training.**
  - “Personal experience with people in general. I think that's helped me, because I used to be, I don't want to say ignorant, but I didn't think it was that important of an issue until I started meeting people that had actually been involved in sexual assault cases. I had to deal with them one-on-one because they were my friends.” (Male)
  - “I think the point of it is to get more personal. If it were up to me, I would take it all the way down to the elements, do the same briefing



*by themselves, for an hour. I think it's more happening down at the squadron levels, not a cadet in some squadron going to another squadron or some people he doesn't even know. It happens within groups that know each other. It's easy to ignore a briefing when there are a thousand other people there. But I think it's a lot harder to ignore something that you're in a conversation, like we're having here, with just a couple of people here. If the person who is inclined to do that too is in the same room, I think that would drastically reduce their chances of doing something sexual.”* (Male)

- **Instill more sense of responsibility in cadets.**

- “*Everybody already knows we need to look out for each other. There's times when people see things and it's like, ‘Mind my own business. That's their business.’ When people see things, people need to feel empowered here, that if you see something, you need to physically step in and prevent it from happening. Instead of after the fact, ‘Hey, what happened?’ Instead of stepping in and taking care of what happened. Erring on the safe side rather than leaving something going unchecked.”* (Male)

### ***Additional Cadet Recommendations***

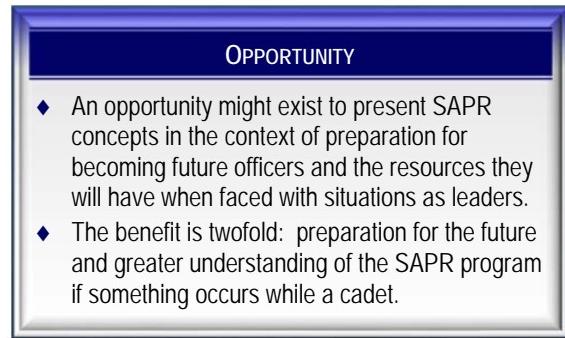
The final major area of discussion in the 2013 SAGR focus groups was titled “Additional recommendations for addressing USC and sexual harassment.” The purpose was to spend a few minutes reflecting on the general discussion of factors influencing USC at the Academy and to drive out any other good ideas from the cadets on ways to reduce it. To start the conversation, cadets were asked how well prepared they felt for dealing with gender-related issues when they have subordinates. The facilitator also asked if a Dignity and Respect Code, similar to the Honor Code, might be helpful in creating a culture of zero tolerance. The facilitator ended the focus groups by asking cadets for their final thoughts on issues and if there were any questions that were not asked but should have been.

### ***Preparation for the Future***

- **Some cadets felt prepared for the future.**

- “*I do. Even if you don't know the answer to the question, there's always someone you can go talk to about it. I think we've started stressing that more too, our resources with the SARC and the chaplains and the different avenues. You don't have to know the answer to everything just because you're a commander. You can say, ‘Let me find out the answer, and I'll get back to you.’”* (Female)
- “*Because now you know the proper channels and people to refer them to, the EO or whoever.”* (Male)
- “*In the CPE lessons, you talk about what your options are as a commander: Go unrestricted, restricted, what options you have at each base you're at.”* (Male)

- “Usually you're given a scenario and then asked how you would respond to it.”  
(Female)
- **Some cadets were not sure how the SAPR system works.**
  - “I can honestly say I'm not even sure how the system really works here. But I think a lot of people don't really know how the system works unless you've actually gone through it. It probably works differently, but parts of it are the same in the real Air Force. But being aware of how that all works would probably be beneficial.”  
(Female)
  - “Thinking back to that training, the punishments that go along with it, judicial and nonjudicial, I don't know how those fit into sexual assault and sexual harassment, how a commander would decide if it's judicial or nonjudicial.”  
(Male)



- **A focus on future preparation might help cadets take the training more seriously.**
  - “Maybe incorporating that into the briefings. Most people I talk to, that really didn't do much for them, those obnoxious briefings. You're going to be dealing with airmen, and if this happens how do you help them? I think people would be a lot more open to listening to that. A lot of the guys who normally joke about it, I think that they would even see value in that, for sure.”  
(Female)

### **Dignity and Respect Code**

- **Some cadets indicated that another code of conduct is unnecessary.**
  - “No. I think we live by enough rules, and we are always trying to get around the rules. Even though we say we all live by the honor code, the honor code isn't perfect. Sometimes people use it to get back at other people. I don't think we need another set of rules. If you report sexual assault and you have an unrestricted, that person can get an Article 15 and their career is over. I think that's a big enough thing.”  
(Female)
  - “We have an unwritten one already. We don't need to make a program to put it into writing.”  
(Female)
  - “Core values are in the honor code, and what we all are expected to live by all go into that. So I think it would be redundant.”  
(Female)

- “*No, because it would all be under different people's interpretation of what's acceptable. It would be as flawed as the toleration clause.*” (Male)
  - “*I think a lot of people would be cynical about that.*” (Male)
  - “*I think action is more important than whatever words we put up on the wall.*” (Male)
- **Cadets felt that implementing another code could instill behaviors for the wrong reason.**
  - “*Or the motivation to follow it is the wrong one. You're like, 'I don't want to get an honor hit.' So instead of wanting to be a dignified person who respects people, you're like, 'Well, I don't want to get a dignified respect hit.'*” (Female)
- **Other cadets thought a Dignity and Respect Code might be helpful.**
  - “*I think it might be a good thing. You hear about the honor code before you come here, and it makes you double-think whether you want to come here and live by that value.*” (Female)
  - “*Maybe make the honor code more [inclusive of dignity and respect] when people are applying. Because the whole point is you're living honorably, because it's supposed to encompass everything.*” (Female)

### ***Final Thoughts***

- **Cadets indicated that it would be helpful to provide additional help for someone who experienced USC prior to entering the Academy.**
  - “*During basic we talk to the basics here. If you need anybody to talk to, you can talk the safety team. They're always available to talk to them. But I think right after basic, it's good to maybe talk to the freshmen more.*” (Female)
- **Cadets felt that the public has a basic misunderstanding of gender-related issues at the Academy.**
  - “[*Talking to a woman in a civilian setting*] She was like, ‘Are you safe? Are you okay? Is it okay as a woman?’ I was so embarrassed. I was like, ‘That's not my life. People don't just get sexually assaulted every day.’ That was her only thing she had ever read about the Academy, probably, sexual assault cases and bad things. I had a little talk with her for a couple of minutes: Actually, all of my guy friends are really great, and none of them have ever sexually assaulted me, and I like my life. The public didn't have to generalize and I didn't have to convince them that my life as a woman here is actually kind of nice. All this stuff is important, but it doesn't make me not want to be here.” (Female)

- “*The media, the way they tend to blow everything that goes on up here out of proportion is another one of those barriers to good reporting or people actually getting the help that they need. Because they know if they do report it unrestricted, for example, and it goes to an Article 32 hearing, that life here is about to get that much more [sarcastically] fun. It's just you don't want to deal with that ever.*” (Female)
  - “*I think it would be interesting to see how we compared to other colleges in the US. A lot of people try and say, ‘Why are you going to go to the Academy? Don't they rape people there and stuff like that?’ But I feel like if we compared to other colleges, they'd have a lot more of those cases as we do here.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that the Academy does a good job helping people deal with traumatic issues like sexual assault.**
  - “*I think they do a great job of that at the Academy. And there has been absolutely no question about when or where or how I could get help. I think SARC is one of the best resources that the Academy has in actually dealing with the people there.*” (Female)
  - “*Whenever there's an issue, I feel like at the end of the briefings, they say, ‘These are your resources.’ And they list a bunch of things: AOCs, peers, Peak Performance Center, SARC. I don't know if that's well received or not, but for me those resource are known.*” (Male)
- **Cadets have a sense of responsibility to watch out for each other.**
  - “*I don't know how many stories I've heard of people stepping in and taking care of people. Seeing a cadet that was really drunk and seeing people from their squadron, who were also drinking but weren't to that point yet, pick them up and say, ‘You're done. We're taking you back.’ So I think for the most part, there are going to be a few cases where it doesn't happen, but I think for the most part, cadets really do take care of each other, regardless if it's your best friend or just someone that you know is a cadet because they have on their class ring or because you've seen them around. I think we do a pretty good job of taking care of each other.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that additional emphasis on male gender-related issues would help.**
  - “*I think it would be helpful to have some more male presence, especially on the SARC. Because whenever we get briefings, it's always from a female. I think maybe that would speak to the males and say, ‘We are looking out for you. We don't think you're just going to cry wolf all the time.’ I think it would help the guys too. He'd be like, he's on SARC and he's manly. It's not just a woman's domain.*” (Female)

- “I think just making men's experience more known. All these cases we hear about are women. I realize that they happen a lot more often, but I think it would hit home for a lot of guys more if they saw guys talking about how they were assaulted or how they were impacted.” (Female)
- Cadets are often reluctant to seek help for stressful issues.
  - “There's a lot of Type A personalities that don't want to ask for help. And then the time thing, it is stressful; that I'm not going to spend four hours a week going down there.” (Male)
  - “They used to do – I don't know if you call it almost a mental state counseling – in basic, where they would just ask you questions, how you're doing, how you're feeling, everything like that, just to get a sense of your mental state. And they discontinued that. I haven't been taken aside by anybody, really, and just asked, ‘How are you – is the stress of the Academy getting to you? How are you feeling?’ And I feel like people, unless they are asked about it, they'll be more likely to keep it to themselves.” (Male)
  - “I think that one comes down to the leadership, because I know in my squad, I get asked three or four times a week how I'm doing. An upper classman will come into my room and approach me and say, ‘Hey, how was your day? What's going wrong?’” (Male)
  - “[Some people get turned off because they're told], ‘You know, it's not going to go on your record at all.’ But right after that, they will say, ‘You have four free visits before it goes on your record, to go to the Peak Performance Center.’ So I think that scares people out of it. I think instead of maybe coming out right with that, maybe give them that information. Because I think that keeps people from going the first time. Maybe say right off the bat, after your second visit, or something like that, say, ‘You have two more visits.’” (Male)
- There are mixed beliefs about the PEER program as a tool for discussing issues.
  - “Yes [a good resource], because they have nondisclosure. You can tell them anything, as long as you didn't hurt yourself or someone else.” (Male)
  - “They're in the same class. They feel like your peer. It's kind of uncomfortable.” (Male)
  - “It's not confidential with them. (Male)

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to change attitudes to acknowledge that mental health is no less important than physical health and the military encourages fitness enhancement.

- Cadets indicated that chaplains are a resource for gender-related issues.
  - “*The first year we were here certain teachers did this, our teacher had us go talk to the chaplain and see how that works, and that really opened my eyes. Because I feel like no one ever really here knows who the chaplain truly is. Has to keep everything confidential, no matter what you say. I feel not everyone here understands that the chaplains have that power. Our whole discussion, the chaplain didn't even bring up religion until I alluded to it, and then she finally brought it in. I feel like that's a major point that needs to be brought across, even if you're not religious or even if you are, the chaplain's there to help you no matter what. And I feel that it's not stressed enough here.*” (Male)
  - “*I feel like people are inclined to go to the chaplain because the chaplain seems like the safest, to me anyways.*” (Female)

## **Chapter 7: U.S. Air Force Academy Faculty and Staff**

Three focus group sessions were conducted at USAFA from March 11-14, 2013. Each session was scheduled for a 90-minute period. The three sessions were: faculty members, coaches and athletic staff, and military staff (AMTs and AOCs). Each session had between eight and eighteen participants.

### ***Sexual Assault***

The 2013 SAGR focus groups were the first time sessions were held with anyone other than cadets. Because faculty and staff interact with cadets daily, the rationale was to present to them many of the same questions posed to the cadet participants to gain a different perspective on issues. The same approach was taken where in each topical area the facilitator made an effort to drive out causes for behaviors or situations being discussed and recommendations for improvement.

The discussions began by sharing with the participants the unwanted sexual contact (USC) rates from the 2012 SAGR and asking whether they had seen those results. Participants were asked to discuss why the rates have increased across the past four survey years. Additional questions were posed for their knowledge of where incidents were most likely to occur, their thoughts on victims experiencing multiple incidents of USC over time, and the role of “sexting” and pornography. Participants further contributed comments on the role alcohol plays in USC, when during the day it is more likely to occur, and whether “victim blaming” occurs.

### ***Familiarity with Incidence Rates from 2012 SAGR***

- **Rates are not as high as faculty and staff expected.**
  - *“I’m surprised the rate isn’t higher. I can think of three people just in my squadron that I know of that I’m almost positive have been sexually assaulted, one in the neighboring squadron, at least one in a squadron on the other side of me. And we don’t have that many women.”* (Military)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that gender issues are pervasive at the Academy.**
  - *“We talk about, not this specifically, but the gender difference in my class and the social psychology and stereotypes. Every single one of my classes said gender. That was the only thing that was consistent among all of my classes. They said because women are so underrepresented here, they’re such a minority, they don’t have a lot of power to fight back, necessarily.”* (Faculty)
  - *“One of the things that has bothered me and sort of astounded me is that in conversations with the male cadets, I have not seen what I would*

#### **OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to ask cadets how they feel about stereotypical attitudes toward gender to help them develop approaches for checking those attitudes in themselves and others.

*describe as an evolved sort of position on gender relations and things like that. In other words, I've seen a lot of kids who have come in and young men who seem to be parroting the same old, same old, same old stuff: 'Male dominance, women shouldn't be here, blah, blah, blah.' And I find myself going, 'Wait a minute. This is 2013. And how long have we been working on this? And where did you come from?' So it's not surprising to me that there's a rating system. My gosh, how degrading." (Faculty)*

- Faculty and staff indicated that relationships that were formed when a cadet arrived at the Academy are disrupted at the beginning of the sophomore year, possibly increasing vulnerability to USC.

- "Well, as far as the power differential, after four degree year [freshman], once you're a three degree [sophomore], there's really not that much of a power differential between a firstie [senior] and three degree. So I actually would have thought more of these would be four degrees reporting. Because as a three degree, a firstie really doesn't have that much to hold over you. You're just another cadet two years ahead." (Faculty)

- "*I would say there's a unique time frame here right now, like when freshmen are recognized and the upper classmen are looking to date freshmen, because now they're recognized. And I would say that that position of power exists at this institution. Because of that differential in power, even though it's perceived power, an upper classmen, it leads to these numbers. If you get a bad seed in that environment, they continue to act. I think of them as recognized freshmen. They don't really know their place at USAFA. All they do is coach the four degrees, but they're in a position where they just don't have a lot of responsibility, and now they have a whole lot of freedom. Everything they were told to do all year, now that summer starts, they have all this freedom. And a lot of them don't understand some of the regulations and the inner workings of USAFA, and they rely on word of mouth, for lack of a better term, or dorm lawyers. 'Hey, what should I do?'"* (Military)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ♦ An opportunity might exist to reconsider the policy about reassigning cadets to new units the end of their freshman year and breaking up the relationships they have forged.
- ♦ Another opportunity might exist to raise awareness among students that loss of cohesiveness and support from peers might contribute to vulnerability in the sophomore year when restrictions are decreased.

- "They go to a new squadron [at the end of freshman year], they're trying to find their niche, trying to seek attention, trying to be accepted. That can be a part of it. It's a policy issue that might contribute to it." (Military)
  - "There's a strong enculturation that's going on. With freshmen, there are very strict rules with how you can interact with them for the whole year. So fraternization is a big thing. There are a lot of rules. That you can't even talk to

*an upper classman unless you're in uniform. When they become upper classmen or red class freshmen, those rules go away. They call it open season or hunting season. The other thing that happens that I think is related to why the incidence for sophomores is so high is the fourth class [freshman] shuffle. As fourth classmen, they have a very tight, cohesive unit, a lot of people looking after them, taking care of them. They're the focus of the squadron. After the end of the freshman year, they get shuffled, they're new. They don't have a support group in that new organization. You're fair game now. Now I don't have as close a network of friends as before, so now I'm isolated. Now an upper classman is paying attention to me. I start forming these relationships and they don't stop. It becomes a more coercive environment. Is really lends itself to that situation. I think more so here than West Point or Annapolis." (Faculty)*

- “*It's a personnel issue. Each of our squadrons get 50 percent turnover every year in personnel, so that is a problem. We rotate out our freshmen when they become sophomores and we get a whole new batch of basic trainees, and we've got to educate them all over again, every time. The sophomores, yes, they're going to get it their freshman year, but you're looking at a whole new group of personnel that we don't know in our unit, 50 percent of them we don't know. Did they attend the training? Did they listen? Then 25 percent of that squadron is brand new to the Air Force. They just did BCT [Basic Cadet Training]. Maybe that's driving your numbers, not changing, because we're just having personnel turnover.*” (Military)
- “*I was going to definitely agree with the whole waiting process with our sophomores. I wholeheartedly agree that if someone were to stay in the squadron for two years, build up who they are after they're a freshman, then when they enter into a different squadron, they have a little more knowledge into that whole trying to fit in. Especially as a female, in your family or your background is more of a people pleaser, doing whatever it takes. It happens.*” (Military)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that there are unique factors at the Academy that might contribute to USC.**
  - “*Here, we have these added dynamics, the power differentials, the lockdown mode that they're thinking. I'd be curious to know how much does that really play into it. Or is this much more like what you'd see at a typical university? How much is alcohol involved? How much is power differential? How much of these are dating incidents?*” (Faculty)
  - “*I think, personally, they're underage and you have drinking involved, and there's a lot more components that they can get in trouble for, so it's a bigger, this is just my personal opinion. In the active duty world, it's not something ‘Okay, this is my job. They are not going to go and report that.’ It's not something they're going to risk their job, their family life, their whole world over. At the Academy, it's just a different world. I don't know another way to describe it. I think it's more reported [survey results] because of that. It's a more focused group.*” (Athletic)

- Faculty and staff indicated that cadets lack some the basic social and life skills due to the nature of the Academy.
  - “When you have someone who comes from the Academy and then they get on active duty, you always hear the people that didn't go to the Academy always talk about the Academy cadets not knowing how to handle life because they were so isolated here. I don't know if that's true. And if it's true in your real life, where you can't manage money because you went to the Academy, how can you manage your social life because you went to the Academy? I guess it all correlates.” (Athletic)
  - “There's definitely a joke about how once you leave here, you flounder. You didn't have to cook a meal. You didn't have to pay your bills. You didn't have to find any housing.” (Athletic)
  - “They used to have a program called Third Lieutenant where, your senior year, you could get an apartment downtown. You showed up for your classes, and then you went back downtown. The whole theory behind that was so it prepared them. But, ironically, this institution is supposed to prepare them to lead, and it's pretty hard to lead your charges if you're living as a bachelor downtown, at the very pinnacle of when you're supposed to be capturing all this leadership and experimenting with leadership before you go out and lead for real. So that's why it ended up but I never saw any evidence that, by allowing people to do that, they somehow were better prepared to do their job.” (Athletic)
- Faculty and staff indicated that changes in restrictions might have an impact on USC incidents.
  - “I don't know if these correspond, but over the past couple years, there seems to be a little more leniency with the cadets up on the hill with their Blue Weekends and their weekend time. I don't know if that corresponds to the increase of incidents here, maybe that's a fine line that you tow. If you have them always underneath your thumbnail, then they're going to lash out at some point. But it seems like they've got more leniency all of a sudden, that maybe they went from being isolated to having too much freedom. I don't know how that corresponds.” (Athletic)
  - “I also know that at one time, they had an open door policy, so you had to have your door open. That's gone away now. You can shut your door with a member of the opposite sex in the same room. In general, though, if you're a predator, I don't feel like that matters. If you want to make it happen... But the Academy represents a cross section of our population, and there's always going to be people who break the law and do things that are inappropriate. You can't eliminate that. The solutions are just fixing symptoms instead of solving the overall problem.” (Athletic)

- Faculty and staff noted that as cadets progress through the class years, they have time to judge potential victims and learn what they can get away with.
  - “*Is there familiarity over time since they go through as a class? Does that make some predators more brazen? Intuitively it may be the opposite, that a predator is going to prey. But if somebody is here at the Academy and they're in a predatory mode or whatever, they've got four years to figure out where the vulnerabilities are and how to mitigate the risk. So they might be more inclined to do something plotted over time versus something that's just a reactive opportunity.*” (Athletic)
  - “*What he said was interesting. Maybe it's not necessarily the same four years that you spend with that other person, but by the time you're a senior, maybe you become more brazen in your desires or willingness to commit that sort of act or think you can get away with it. But maybe by that point, you think you've got it all figured out here at the Academy.*” (Athletic)
- Faculty and staff do not think that all attention paid to the sophomore class is necessarily unwanted.
  - “*When you talk about ‘open season,’ I have to wonder whether or not that's just a saying or whether it's really an attitude. Frankly, the freshmen are just as excited to be allowed to date as the upper classmen are to be able to date them. So whether or not it's a joke or whether it's an honest attitude that they feel like they can aggressively pursue somebody, I would be interested to know. They might say it with some humor but not really believe it.*” (Faculty)
- Faculty and staff noted that experiences of sexual assault prior to entering the Academy might impact the current rates being higher.
  - “*One of the classes, I forget if it was seniors or juniors right now, but the rate of females assaulted prior to getting here was 50 percent. It was really high.*” (Faculty)
  - “*That may explain your numbers, as well, why they are going up. The class rate being assaulted more when they come in, they could be re-assaulted more while they're here.*” (Faculty)
- Faculty and staff indicated that some students might be more isolated and could benefit from additional support.
  - “*Would it also be good to ask [on the survey], especially the females, about their sense of their number of friends? How isolated do you feel? How supported do you feel? How many good friends do you have that you can call on in a tough situation? Because I think there's a big variation. I would assume that there's a big variation.*” (Faculty)

## **Location of Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- Faculty and staff indicated that dorms, classrooms, and locker rooms are possible locations of USC.
  - “Dorms or underneath in the tunnels.” (Faculty)
  - “Classrooms at night.” (Faculty)
  - “My two biggest guesses would be over here in Fairchild, just because it's so sparsely populated after hours, and on away trips of some sort.” (Faculty)
  - “I would say dorm rooms. All of the incidents I've heard of were related to dorm rooms or off base parties. Typically, with the cadets, it's going to a civilian university setting or frat house or things like that and then it goes south from there.” (Athletic)
  - “Locker rooms, possibly. We have people at night that come down and patrol, make sure things are locked. But you can't check the locker rooms unless you know the code.” (Athletic)
- Faculty and staff indicated that cadets will find ways to be alone.
  - “We are here a lot. All these people are here a lot. We have an OD [Officer of the Day] on shift, and that stuff is still happening. We have someone always around, 24/7, an officer, an NCO, seasoned veterans with this kind of stuff, and it's still happening. They shut their doors. They have texts. They have some kind of networks so they can stay inside of our thought process and know when and where we're at. Oh, he's in our building. So they can do that. And they just have a way around.” (Military)
- Faculty and staff indicated that additional surveillance might help deter potential offenders.
  - “I think one thing that might help, and I think we're already exploring it, is having security cameras in the common areas and the hallways. Even though you're not seeing what's happening behind the closed doors, people have to get there somehow, so they have to go to the room. And in terms of a criminal investigation or a substantial allegation, that could be very helpful.” (Military)
- Faculty and staff indicated that a preventive action would be to lock doors.
  - “Lock their doors. They never lock their doors.” (Military)

### OPPORTUNITY

- ♦ An opportunity might exist to send the signal that facilities are being watched by increasing more passive surveillance approaches (cameras, sampling of electronic access records, random walkthroughs).

- Faculty and staff indicated that dorms are the most likely locations for USC during summer.
  - “*I think it's the dorms.*” (Faculty)
  - “*Sijan Hall in the summer. They have summer rec and aviation groups, and there is a serious lack of oversight because BCT takes so much of a focus. I don't get over to my squadron at all when I'm working BCT. The teachers go through and do the dorm inspections, the random stuff for the academic building. I'm not sure how often things happen or get over there. I just know we are very locked in the BCT, and our focus is taken away from them in summer programs. I don't know if the aviation group comes up and looks in there, I don't know, in the dorms.*” (Military)
- Faculty and staff indicated that when USC occurs at off campus locations, it is more likely to be on local trips than Academy-sponsored trips.
  - “*The organized trips have so many rules and so much oversight that I bet it's more rare on a club trip or an athletic trip.*” (Faculty)
  - “*It's like the cadets feel like they're out in the wild and they need to do whatever. Because they feel so constrained here, that a lot of times when they get out of here, they just go do stupid things without thinking.*” (Faculty)

### ***Multiple Incidents of Unwanted Sexual Contact***

- Faculty and staff opinions differed on whether multiple experiences of USC involved the same offender or different offenders.
  - “*The weak one in the herd, or who they perceive doesn't have that social support, won't be able to fight back, doesn't have the skills to fight back.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I would say just the opposite: One guy focusing on one girl and having her under his thumb and continually just going after one person, just not being able to say no. But I don't know. I'm just guessing.*” (Faculty)
  - “*There was a female who repeatedly found herself in situations where she could not – I don't want to put it on her – but she would repeatedly take it to second and third base, and she wanted to stop it there. But whether she couldn't communicate that well enough or maybe the man overpowered her, but it was a couple different offenders, different people doing the similar thing to her. And the setup was the same on her part almost every time. So there was obviously education to her, as well, in how can you avoid this from happening. It doesn't justify it, but she's putting herself in awkward situations.*” (Military)
  - “*On the other side of that case [comment above], you had the same group of people that were probably talking amongst themselves and sharing that information, like, 'So-and-So is very vulnerable.' So that's something that I*

*would consider. Not just the victim's side, but the other side, in a small group of people.”* (Military)

- **Faculty and staff indicated that the type of report (restricted versus unrestricted) makes a difference in repeat offenses.**
  - *“What about the reported/unreported, the SARC piece of this? If you go restricted on a report, that person goes about their business every day, and so does everybody else, to offend again. So I don't know if that helps. I think that's probably a hindrance. It's a help to the victim, but it doesn't help the process in any way.”* (Military)
  - *“I think some victims still don't understand. Even though they do these briefings, I don't think anybody understands anything out of that. It's too stressful of an environment, and then it turns into every year, it's the same thing. And I think, too, a lot of victims feel maybe they did something to bring this on, so is it right to accuse someone when maybe I did something to do that? So there could be a little bit of that. And then a lot of the women, especially, who come here, they do see themselves as a very strong female. And now something like this happens, and it can really hit their self-esteem. They want to be able to cope with it themselves. So doing that shows a little bit more weakness, whether or not it's restricted or unrestricted.”* (Military)

### **Duty Day Versus Personal Day**

- **Faculty and staff indicated that cadets behave differently during the duty day and during personal time.**
  - *“They're looking to shut off the military side of their brain at 1630. So the more you associate with the military side of their brain, the less they are going to want to think about it after class.”* (Faculty)
  - *“They just suppress it better when they're in uniform.”* (Military)

### **Victim Blaming**

- **Faculty and staff noted that victim blaming was strong among female cadets in the past but is not widespread today.**
  - *“Absolutely. During the '03 when the big media/sexual issue, most of the players on the team, females, were very judgmental. I'm not saying that they were inappropriately judgmental. They had very strong opinions about the behavior that the victims themselves had been involved in and they had very strong opinions on it. That's very much the way the team felt. Some of those females that engaged in behavior that contributed, at least, to their assault. And in no way does that justify it. But there was a very strong opinion of that among the other cadet females.”* (Athletic)

- “*I think the climate is maybe a little bit they're a little bit more savvy now than they used to be about saying that openly or in a place where we would hear it. But I think it's a part of the cadet discussion still.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I think it's mostly a denial that it's happening. It's not this many rapes are taking place. It's he said/she said, everybody was drunk, so that's not rape. It's a rationalization that's happening that I hear most often.*” (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that victims are not likely to “cry wolf” due to the repercussions that would come along with doing that.**
  - “*I don't necessarily think that they cry wolf. I don't see crying wolf being an issue here because of the victimization, the embarrassment. I can tell you that almost all those girls had to go through so much shaming. ‘Why didn't you do this? Why were you wearing that? Why were you making poor decisions?’ So I don't see crying wolf to get out of trouble. Because I would say it's more troubling to actually report it.*” (Military)
  - “*I can't see a female lying about sexual assault because of all the other stuff they go through. But there are some very vindictive women out there, and men, that will lie, in other areas possibly, to get their revenge. But I can't see it coming from a sexual assault perspective.*” (Military)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that people need to set aside stereotypes when it comes to gender-related issues.**
  - “*Until we get a good track record of convictions, I think a lot of people know that when you go on the stand for a sexual assault case, you are pretty much setting yourself up to be revictimized because of the way our legal system works, which is innocent until you're proven guilty, which is totally the way it should be. But I think our society has a long way to go where we're able to treat victims with compassion and yet still get the truth. Because right now, we play all the societal stereotypes. ‘Oh, your skirt was too short, you were drinking, so all of this is your fault, and it's not the perpetrator's fault.’*” (Military)
  - “*Unfortunately, for the females here, you have a boyfriend or two, it's a 4:1 ratio. That's known. When you want to have two or three boyfriends and a guy can have six or seven girlfriends and that's normal, you are considered loose. That's not fair. That can cause a lot of stress for the female, which can cause them to be pushed into that type of environment, which also can cause something as drastic as what just happened. I don't know how we can prevent that.*” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that the defense in a sexual assault case can cause people to focus on the victim's role.**
  - “*Word does travel fast among the cadets. You're right with the victimization. They put the victims up there and they relive the whole thing, but then the defense*

*will bully them almost into ‘Why didn’t you do this? You could have kicked. You could have done all this.’ And I think that gets around also, and it does scare other victims, whether or not they’re strong enough to get up there and go through that again and then be questioned in that way. Because, in a way, you start to question yourself. Why didn’t I do that? You can second-guess afterwards. It’s difficult and emotional for them.”* (Military)

### **Use of Alcohol**

- Faculty and staff indicated that alcohol is typically involved in USC, but not in every case.
  - *“It surprises me that it’s that low [60% of women who experienced USC in 2012 indicated that alcohol was involved either by them, the offender, or both].”* (Athletic)
  - *“We have this perception that people that can’t handle their liquor probably don’t have enough responsibility to manage their sexual/social. What about the other 40 percent that are people that, whatever you put them into, they’re going to react to those behaviors? And you have to protect the cadets from those kind of people. So identifying those people and having some deterrent in place, other than just telling women not to dress provocatively or don’t go out and drink or don’t go to bars where there might be somebody bad – I mean, that doesn’t solve sexual assault.”* (Athletic)

### **Faculty and Staff Recommendations**

- Focus on the psychological issues of offenders more.
  - *“I think that’s more education based, the SAPR program. We’re not talking about treating behavior. Sexual assault and all the things that happen with that are behavior issues with a person. We’re talking about a person needing some type of counseling, something like that, obviously. Those behaviors happen for a reason. It stems from something that happened in their childhood or something like that. I’m assuming they have to want to change and walk the talk. I’m talking about the violator. That’s why the numbers are higher.”* (Military)
  - *“This sounds really weird, but there’s a protected avenue for the victim. If I was an 18 year old cadet who had these urges to go violate or sexually assault somebody, I don’t think there’s a protected avenue, outside the chaplain, that I can go talk to, to say, ‘I need help.’ We just had a cadet this week who has been depressed his whole life. Finally got some help this week for some suicidal thoughts, and boom, he’s in a hospital for a week. So it’s kind of some negative feedback for that. If I speak up, there goes my security clearance. So I don’t think you’re ever going to identify the violators or the perpetrators.”* (Military)

- “[In response to a comment that cadets are afraid to seek help for fear of impact on their career] Believe me, we’re telling them that the Peak Performance Center is there for them and it’s non-retribution. Everyone in this room has done that.” (Military)
- **Facilitate better coordination among Academy departments to help identify potential offenders.**
  - “There was one cadet in particular, the only way we started to notice he had a serious character flaw and seriously didn’t belong being an officer because of his character flaws and other integrity issues, only came from once a sports person came forward, a PE teacher came forward, a faculty member came forward, an NCAA person came forward, a soccer sports manager came forward about this person.” (Athletic)
  - “I’ve started to think maybe we should do like psych evals or personality tests during basic training and just identify people that are high levels on narcissism or think they can beat the system and things like that. Just keep an eye on it so not only do taxpayers not waste \$400,000 and kick this guy out as a senior, but we save ourselves a lot of heartache.” (Athletic)
  - “I think everybody could benefit from that. You hear about things that shouldn’t happen, but you don’t hear about ‘This is a personality trait that, if you see somebody exhibit this and this together, you should stay far away or keep your eye on them.’ As a female here, and in life, that could definitely help me filter in the information that I receive.” (Athletic)
- **Addressing the psychological stressors as drivers for unwanted behaviors.**
  - “Touching on the suicide subject and talking about the elevated levels, we’re definitely in a crisis mode in this nation, in this world and talking about getting deployed, if there’s a correlation between our inability to control our own lives and are acting out on our aggression. So, obviously, sexual assault is an aggressive act. And suicide is the ultimate act of aggression towards yourself. So I wonder if you look outside of just the sexual assault world and then you look at was it correlated to what our population of people is going through and episodes

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist for better coordination among departments through periodic reviews with input from everyone who interacts with each cadet.
- ◆ Reviews might include confidential discussions about cadets, confidential psychological screening if warranted, and informing faculty and staff about warning signs and methods for raising issues.

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to create a “healthy mind” campaign to help students deal with the stress of the Academy.

*of alcoholism and suicide rates or domestic violence. I'm sure they're all up, I could imagine.”* (Athletic)

- Continue to provide awareness training and bystander training.
  - “That's what we were looking at as a team. Because I had girls, I would protect girls and I had girls protecting me. And I wish more females and males at the Academy had groups, regardless if it's Wings of Green or Drum and Bugle, but had groups that, when they went out, I have a designee person that I'm going to watch and protect.” (Athletics)
  - “The cadets are given a PowerPoint presentation, and they're the ones that should be giving the bystander intervention training. If we did that, that would start to change the culture because we'd train them how to effectively be assertive, how to go into situations, how to not make it awkward for people. We're doing a terrible job on that. Green Dot is a pretty effective intervention program. It's been very slow coming online. We're talking about strategies and how to bring Green Dot on board.” (Faculty)
  - “We don't emphasize prevention. We emphasize response. The SARC, what do we do, how to report. There's very little emphasis on prevention here.” (Faculty)

### ***Sexual Harassment and Sexist Behavior***

Similar to the cadet focus groups, this set of questions posed a hypothesis about the relationship of verbally offensive behaviors, such as sexual harassment and sexist comments, on USC. The facilitator began by sharing results from the 2012 SAGR on rates of sexual harassment and sexist behavior at the Academy over the past four surveys and hearing participants' reactions. The facilitator then gave additional findings based on 2012 SAGR that those men and women who experienced USC in the past year also tended to experience sexual harassment and sexist behavior at higher rates. Participants commented on the possible relationships among these unwanted gender-related behaviors and what the impact might be of addressing the verbal behaviors and possibly reducing USC. Following up, the facilitator asked if cultural factors, such as attitudes of disrespect toward women, contributed to USC. This section ended with a discussion of recommendations for decreasing sexual harassment and sexist behavior.

### ***Familiarity with Incidence Rates from 2012 SAGR***

- Faculty and staff thought the rates of sexual harassment and sexist behavior seemed low.
  - “Personally, it seems low to me. Just from what I've seen this past year with my athletes and what they've told me. So to me, that seems low.” (Athletic)
  - “With the Don't Ask, Don't Tell, more jokes, more... I thought the males would be higher too.” (Athletic)

- Faculty and staff indicated that sexist behavior is partly a cultural issue.
  - “*There's a very strong culture – again, I say it's about enculturation. We make people immune to things that they don't think are right. There's the idea that 'Well, it's just the way it is.' They've just resolved to that idea that this is the way it is at the Academy. I think a lot of it comes from how they're trained earlier on.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I had a similar incident that came up in a book I was reading in one of our classes. There was a reference in the book to some guys who were always telling sexist jokes, and the girls in the book started avoiding that area. At first, the students didn't recognize that moment. One of my students said, 'Yeah, that's just like all the jokes that I hear when I'm crossing the terrazzo or whatever.' Another female student said, 'What are you talking about?' She said, 'You know the things the guys are saying.' She said, 'Oh, I just ignore that.' So there's this awareness of it, but there's also an acceptance of that's just what's going to happen.*” (Faculty)
- Faculty and staff had a difference of opinion about disrespect at the Academy.
  - “*The men at the Academy, the way they view women at the Academy is totally disrespectful. And at least a small group makes a big problem for the rest of the guys. But then when they talk about girls that aren't Blue, that are off base, and they're like, 'Oh, she's so hot or whatever.' Totally give females that are not within the gates much more respect than they do girls that are within the gates, which is unfortunate.*” (Athletic)
  - “*I see both sides. I've seen the brother side, who has held me to a higher standard, who said, 'You're the absolute best of the best.' And then I've seen that small part like what you're saying [disrespect is pervasive]. So I do agree with the small part, but I also see the brother side, where there's a bigger population that says, 'You are that very small population of women that have the intelligence and not just looks, but your brains and sports, athleticism, the whole package, rather than just looking at the outside; that, as an Air Force officer, you're going to be somebody. So it depends.*” (Athletic)
- Faculty and staff indicated that some cadets might be more sensitive to sexist comments; hence they indicate more frequent experiences.
  - “*I'm just wondering if these people aren't more sensitive. I'm not saying they are, and I'm not minimizing anything. But some people are more sensitive to those types of things. Like you were saying, some people can't ignore that type of thing. Not that we should ignore that type of thing, but maybe we are ignoring too much.*

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to emphasize the idea that the Academy is not the typical college or fraternity house; cadets are expected to uphold higher standards so those who do not will stand out against a backdrop of professional, respectful behavior.

*Maybe we're not sensitive enough and they're the right amount of sensitive.”*  
(Faculty)

- “*Those stats also could be attributed to that victim being more sensitive to and reliving the events and then seeing other things that remind her of that event, or him of that event, and being like, ‘That's offensive to me,’ or ‘You just crossed the line.’”* (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that other cadets become immune to sexual harassment.**
  - “*They're becoming immune to some of the comments. I couldn't tell you how many times I hear stuff in the office, as the CQ. You can't say stuff like that. They think, ‘This is where we live. That's not an appropriate thing to say.’”* (Military)
  - “*The class breakdown would be interesting on this one. The freshmen they feel they're offensive, maybe by their junior/senior year, they're calloused? They're not embarrassed because they know that guy or that girl better now and they're not offended? Maybe three years ago they would have been offended.”* (Military)

### ***Relationship to Unwanted Sexual Contact***

- **Faculty and staff indicated that some cadets might escalate their behavior if unchecked.**
  - “*I think it might be their environment, that some little things are tolerated, so the perpetrator might think, I'm getting away with this, and so it escalates.”* (Military)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that sexist behavior is a tool used by offenders.**
  - “*It's also well known within the SARC community, if you will, that sexist behavior, sexist comments, sexual overtones of behavior are used as probes by perpetrators. And so to me, it makes total sense that the person who ends up being assaulted was also the target of a barrage of probes.”* (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that reducing sexual harassment and sexist behavior might help in reducing USC.**
  - “*That's exactly what you were saying. I think there's a lot of validity to that. If somebody is probing and they know that not only does that potential victim say no and stand up for their rights but that other people support them, that the culture is going to support that you knock this off, then they're going to stop probing.”* (Faculty)
  - “*Everything you described is for the victim. And if you want to cut down on the numbers, you've got to cut down on the perpetrator. We did some of that this past year where we went through and we took down [offensive items]. If you've got a*

*picture of a lady in a bikini on your wall, that minimizes the female. That stat in here that said sexist comments is 80 percent? If you can get some of that stuff down, I think you can get some of the perpetrators down. I think you need to build up the value of individuals and educate – be proactive from the perpetrator standpoint.”* (Military)

- “*I think that what happens is the people that are perpetrating stand out a lot more against a background of less overall sexist behavior.*” (Military)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that caution must be taken in how sexual harassment and sexist behavior is addressed.**
  - “*I was going to say, it's kind of a tricky balance. If you start to come down really hard on what might have been intended as an innocent joke but somebody was offended, you're going to widen the gap between the females and the males. That's what happened back in 2002, 2003, with the sexual assault scandal. Guys became afraid to talk to girls. They became so isolated. We certainly don't ignore it, but maybe coaching and better ways of correcting that type of behavior.*” (Faculty)
- **Some faculty and staff indicated sexist behavior does not necessarily lead to more aggressive behaviors.**
  - “*I don't necessarily agree that somebody could be doing sexist things, but that doesn't mean that they're going to eventually go down this continuum and commit a crime. Some people could already be at that continuum, though. So I don't think it correlates that if you say something sexist, that you're going to sexually harass somebody and then you're going to make unwanted sexual contact.*” (Athletic)
  - “*I think verbal is different. I think if you can physically do something, you have a more tendency to continue to go further, in my opinion.*” (Athletic)

### **Faculty and Staff Recommendations**

- **Teach cadets that unwanted behaviors might be progressive to encourage them to speak up when something is offensive.**
  - “*You have to be careful not to suggest that it's the victim's fault or job to do this. But I think it starts with the victim recognizing, being a little bit more aware of what counts as harassment, feeling empowered to say something and knowing that the culture would support them. You know what it's like for a woman to be out there trying to saying, ‘That bugs me. Knock it off,’ and to then become the target for a lot of jokes.*” (Faculty)

- **Provide awareness training in small groups.**
  - “*I was going to suggest, I don't know how the whole BCT thing works, but I know that they have flight commanders in BCT. To me, it's much more effective in a smaller group to say to a kid who's been sheltered all their life, who comes to an institution and is going to take over as their oversight, it's much more effective in a small group to say, ‘We know you. We care about you. Here's something you need to be aware of.’ I recruit kids from, say, their junior year even, all the way through to when they come to the Academy, and then we are with them four years. So we get to know each other at a much deeper level. And their teammates know each other much better, typically, than a squadron mate would. So I think, in terms of just verbal education and sort of a reality check, I think that's the place to do it, is much smaller groups, versus the giant lecture hall. Because they do get lectured to death. In a group setting in BCT, with a female flight commander and all the girls in the BCT squadron, for someone to say, ‘Okay, guess what. There's 3,000 guys here, and you need to be smart and you need to take care of yourselves and you need to take care of each other.’”* (Athletic)

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

In this section of questions, participants were asked how they perceived their roles with respect to preventing and responding to USC. They were asked to describe the interactions they have with students on these issues, their interactions with the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) staff, and recommendations for helping them better deal with issues.

### **Perceived Roles**

- **Faculty and staff indicated that relationships between cadets and staff vary.**
  - “*We are trained a lot more in response than to watch out for when cadets have a difference of behavior.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I also wonder maybe if IC [Intercollegiate] females have a better outlet than the rest of the wings. Because I get to know my girls like the back of my hand. They will come to me with just about anything. Whereas other females in the wings, I don't think they necessarily have that relationship with another female that's of a different rank.*” (Athletics)
  - “*I mentor one or two cadets, and that's one or two out of the rest of the population, and they always express that. They're not on any teams. They don't have anyone to talk to at all.*” (Athletic)



- Faculty and staff indicated that cadets appreciate hearing about real experiences.
  - “*Sometimes the cadets benefit from hearing lessons learned during active duty careers. I'll share experiences I've had: A guy leaving his phone number on my windshield at the gym. Or even non-sexual assault/sexual harassment related, like how I handled a contractor who was committing fraud or how I handled a senior NCO who lied to me. Just how to appropriately handle those tough situations that make you feel awkward, but you need to stand up for what's right. So I try and incorporate those in my classes.*” (Faculty)

### **Interactions with SAPR Staff**

- Military staff members interact with SAPR staff as needed.
  - “*When we have to. I'm not saying that in a negative way. But just when we have to, we certainly interact with them quite a bit.*” (Military)
  - “*It's good to have a professional to go to when you have a crisis situation. We spend a lot of time with these young people, and when there's something big like that, it's good to have a professional to go to.*” (Athletic)
  - “*The SARC is so available – I feel comfortable talking with my athletes on almost anything, but I'm not an expert in that field. And I would feel more comfortable saying, I'm here for you if you need to talk, but it's better that you go to somebody that can expertly guide you through this process. And that allows a little differentiation between my relationship with my athletes. Because I'd just like for them to get the better care that they need with someone experienced.*” (Athletic)
- Faculty and staff indicated that SAPR training for cadets could be improved.
  - “*Focusing more on behaviors of both sides, victims and perpetrators, versus just the same regurgitated information every year.*” (Military)
  - “*The standard, rote type of brief that we give them over and over and over is just exactly – they're like, ‘Whatever.’ But I do think the specific presentations that they give, like Sex Signals and the Ann Munch presentation, the new one they did last year – I don't know what they called it, but they did a presentation on those that had been assaulted in the past. I think those are effective. I think some people will tune them out no matter what. But they're engaging and they're different, and it's not the ‘Okay, what's a restricted report? What's an unrestricted report? Who's a mandatory reporter?’ It's not that briefing.*” (Military)
  - “*You know what would be shocking and great would be an actual fire alert in a squadron and I'm being serious. Having a person run into a room and attack – an actual role play, would be my only suggestion. That would shock and be something new. Other than that, I don't think another PowerPoint brief or*

*anything would be different. [For example] They talked about the fires that the janitor was setting off for years. That was something that spread like wildfire. And whether it was true or not, we had a girl get harassed by a senior, and that was talked about. She directly came up to another coach, and she explained how she defended herself. And that guy is in jail now. That spread and that helped.”* (Athletic)

- “*Do a videotape of a Hap's [on campus bar] scenario and show it at Arnold Hall, just a simple guy and a girl sitting down and the guy put his hand on her thigh. I'm being serious. I'm just giving suggestions of a real life scenario.*” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that SAPR training for staff was helpful.**
  - “[Bystander intervention training] It was for all military, whoever supervises military. They're not holding them right now, so I don't know what's going on with that. [Was it useful to you?] Yes. They played a video, and then you spoke about it. It was somebody was sitting at a bar and watching somebody else drug a drink and then gave it to the girl and whether or not they say anything. It was eye opening about people's courage to stand up for what they know is right and wrong and getting involved in other people's lives and being like, I don't know you, but your boyfriend just drugged your drink. That's a brave thing to do.” (Athletic)

### **Faculty and Staff Recommendations**

- **Encourage mentorships and more personal relationships with cadets.**
  - “*Smaller groups, more intimate, one-on-one, actual knowledge of each other.*” (Athletic)
  - “*An AOC called me and said, ‘Would you be willing to mentor this cadet?’ If more AOCs would do that with just random people. Of course, I was like, ‘Oh, I never even thought of that, but sure.’ That was amazing.*” (Athletic)
  - “*If you have someone like myself who would mentor some females that are freshmen – there should be enough females, I would imagine, on base. It doesn't actually have to be military; just another female in the system. Like a sponsor family, but on base, at work.*” (Athletic)

### **Cultural Change**

The facilitator began this section by stating that some people believe the Academy can improve USC prevention and response by changing the culture and attitudes toward this issue. Participants were asked if they agreed and how such change could be made. The section ended with a question about the usefulness of a Dignity and Respect Code.

## **Need for Cultural Change**

- Faculty and staff indicated that there are perceptions among some cadets that the Academy has competing goals.
  - *"I hear a common theme among a lot of cadets that I talk to. They believe that the Academy is more concerned with their image than the cadets."* (Faculty)
  - *"That's a very common reaction."* (Faculty)
  - *"I'm not sure that that's true everywhere, but it seems to be true where it matters. The people that control the image oftentimes really are concerned. There are a number of people that would say, let's be open about these things so we can have honest change. But not everybody."* (Faculty)
- Faculty and staff indicated that there is a need for cultural change in addition to programs.
  - *"A lot of things are not like the real Air Force. Because when that happens in your actual squadron, after it's all over, it gets briefed or it gets briefed with the group or something, and you find out Tech Sergeant Blah Blah Blah or Captain So-and-So, you see the whole thing. And the cadet wing rules are not the same as the UCMJ in a lot of factors, like my first semester here, when I had 95 percent or more hung over or drunk coming into my class after they got their AFSC. I got on them for like three days straight. If you do this in the real world I would give them a whole commander's brief on that. I can't come to work like that. Why is it acceptable for you guys to do it? Why can't they have the same rules as they do in the real word? Why do they have to have a separate, special set of rules? It doesn't make any sense to me."* (Faculty)
- Faculty and staff indicated that there are many repercussions for reporting USC.
  - *"I don't think we've hit enough on the prosecution here. The thing that I hear from a lot of cadets is I'm afraid to report because the system revictimizes the victim for a long time. These cases are really drawn out. They are very, very contentious. The woman ends up getting a reputation or having to deal with cadet attitudes because this is such a fish bowl. People know who has raised complaints. And there are so few convictions. That's what I would say is a huge driver, like you were talking about. I just think there has to be much, much, more done about that."* (Faculty)
- Faculty and staff indicated that the culture at the Academy might be changing from past years.
  - *"We used to say here that the people who came here were the best and brightest of the nation, and I think that has changed a little bit. I think the people who*

*come here are the best and the brightest of those people who would be willing to serve in the military. So I think that we end up having young people who have very standard, conservative, patriotic backgrounds who come here because they're among those who are willing to serve in the military. And so over time, our group of students who come here have maybe coalesced into this group of people who are perhaps from a more traditional, male/female relational spectrum, et cetera.”* (Faculty)

### **Affecting Cultural Change**

- Faculty and staff indicated that a focus on subgroups might be more effective than trying to address cultural change within the whole student body.
  - “*All of this is trying to look at the entire Cadet Wing overall and the culture of the Cadet Wing, and I'm sure all of us have these opinions based on our niche, where we function and whether we see it in that niche or not. I think it raises the bigger question of subcultures, that when you're doing these analyses and trying to look at everything broadly, you may not be getting the fidelity you need because there are certain subcultures. And when you hear about the rates of where you get harassment, where you get the culture that's really talking about open hunting and supporting that and so forth, I imagine you don't find that everywhere. I imagine you could go to certain cadets that say, 'I've never heard of this' or 'This isn't true in my group of friends.' So trying to figure out where the subgroups are, the subcultures that still support this, I think would give you more bang for your buck.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I don't know if this is anecdotal or if there's good evidence, but over time there have been particular sports teams that I think that culture is very supportive of being perpetrators and so forth, either heavy drinking and really supporting that and then feeling very, very entitled to go and perpetrate.*” (Faculty)
  - “*Each squadron has a different culture. There is a USAFA culture. My squadron, their idea of training is PT, no matter how much in the past two years. I'd say, 'Hey, you need to show the freshmen where the road is. Show them where to go in Fairchild Hall. Let's do some mentoring, let's do some counseling, show them show points in the school year. Do all that.' Then all the doors just shut, and they go to their rooms and it's a separate entity. And they're just on an individual basis doing their thing. And they don't mentor at all. No matter how much we try bringing in 'inspire to inspire' programs, and they just resist. There's a lot of resistance to it. That's just my unit. Some squadrons jump into that mentoring role.*” (Military)
- Faculty and staff indicated enforcing rules would help change attitudes and culture.
  - “*If we had zero tolerance and actually enforced it – they're young, they're still learning, they're developing, we get that, but if you do these things, it shows that*

*you are not fit to graduate from the Air Force Academy and become an officer. This is what we do. They know the rules, and we are enforcing them. Sometimes here we're so worried and trying to protect them so much that we aren't really protecting them anymore.”* (Faculty)

- “Now there's more of a sense of there are certain things you can get away with. Roll the dice and see whether or not you get punished. So there's a lot more willingness to try to cut some corners with some things in the Wing.” (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff stated that the culture of the Academy is not independent of society.**
  - “I think that the real bottom line is that different sectors of our society have all the different rates. We are continuing to evolve as a society, where the level of respect between men and women is in flux, it seems, but ever so slowly moving in the right direction. But there will always be sexual assault, unfortunately. And if you truly try to build the Air Force Academy as a reflection of society, then we're going to reflect what's going on in society.” (Faculty)
  - “I think the problem starts long before they come here, in junior high or something. They need to learn how to respect each other. I don't think it's taught, standardized, across the board.” (Military)
  - “I think some of it is based on military values. Don't hook up with your subordinates. So if I'm the flight commander, even though I'm a junior and my leader is a junior, maybe I shouldn't be hooking up with her because I'm technically her superior. There are lessons that we're trying to instill that carry on to a career. But yes, to a 20 year old, that may seem oppressive.” (Military)
  - “The findings from Lackland AFB really boil down to establishing a culture of respect. When I look at the traditions about how we train our fourth class cadets, there's a lot of room there for disrespect. When we cultivate a climate of disrespect, I think it leads to disrespect in other areas as well, whether it's disrespect of gender or disrespect of sexual boundaries. I know that many squadrons are trying to do things differently, where they are really working on leadership qualities with their fourth class cadets, versus just really intense training sessions that may turn disrespectful.” (Military)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that the Academy culture does not allow for mistakes.**
  - “We're very paternalistic. We want them to run the Wing, but we don't want them to make mistakes. We don't want it to hurt them, so we don't let them. We say they're in charge, but we don't let them be in charge. So they have all these mixed messages on: I'm an adult, I'm a leader; but, no, I'm not. I'm a child. You're not going to let me do anything. So I'm going to step out and try to be a leader, but then you're not going to let me be a leader. From what I can see and what they've

*told me over the years, they're so confused about what they're supposed to do and what they can do and what they can't do that a lot of times they just give up. They push the envelope, they push the system, and then they graduate. And God forbid they start telling these sexual harassment type things in the real Air Force. That's when they get woken up. That's when they start getting the Article 15s and they start getting court-martialed for all the stuff they've done here. And they've learned they can get away with it here.”* (Faculty)

- “*The other thing that comes to mind is the culture, really. The 30,000 foot culture that oversees the Academy, I don't think they're about to say, ‘We'll just give more Blue Weekends and let everybody run around.’ That smacks of irresponsibility. I don't think they're in any position to be able to say that. I do think those of us who are in the trenches and see kids daily, I think at least, I try to give them some freedom to make a few mistakes because I think that's hard to do here. It doesn't necessarily pertain to this kind of stuff [sexual assault]. But for what it's worth, I don't think they're allowed to make many mistakes here. I don't know that there's an easy solution for the bosses to make.*” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that the competitive nature of the Academy has an impact on relationships among cadets.**
  - “*There are systems put in place here to where performance is defined as individual courage. We look at individuals. The more they do for themselves, the more they take care of themselves, the better they do overall. At West Point, their focus is different because they are leading people in a much more supportive chain of command. We don't have people in spots like element leaders and some of the key leadership positions.*” (Faculty)
  - “*Social currency [based on reputation]. That is the number one thing we fight, that they don't want to correct their buddy because I don't want to be seen as this.*” (Military)
- **Faculty and staff indicated that some inappropriate behavior stems from “wishful thinking.”**
  - “*With our guys and watching them interact, I think they get a lot of their social skills, whether it's talking to friends that go to civilian colleges or the YouTube videos or the social media, or because they're exposed to that. So they're getting that ‘grass is greener on the other side.’ They have the best lives. They get to go party all the time. They get to do this. They get to do that. They want that so bad. They want to not be a cadet so bad. They usually see it after they graduate. But I think some of their social skills are learned through social media and other resources.*” (Athletic)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to lower the emphasis on individual achievement and increase emphasis on contributions to the group.

## **Dignity and Respect Code**

- Faculty and staff indicated that the goals of a Dignity and Respect Code can possibly be achieved through education.
  - *“I think codifying it wouldn’t really help because that would be another rule that they’re forced to follow. Maybe something you have to teach and instill in themselves instead of mandating it in a code.”* (Military)

## **Additional Faculty and Staff Recommendations**

The final major area of discussion in the 2013 SAGR focus groups was titled simply “Additional recommendations for addressing USC and sexual harassment.” The purpose was to spend a few minutes reflecting on the general discussion of factors influencing USC at the Academy and to drive out any other good ideas from the participants on ways to reduce it. The facilitator ended the focus groups by asking for any final thoughts on issues and if there were any questions that were not asked but should have been.

## **Final Thoughts**

- Faculty and staff indicated that cadets are reluctant to seek help for unwanted sexual assault or sexual harassment.
  - *“There’s a stigma about seeking help here, though. They’re trying to change that, but that mentality of going to seek help is negative.”* (Athletic)
- Faculty and staff indicated that some gender-related actions have a negative outcome.
  - *“I don’t think we need more of the no-notice morality scrubs that we had, for instance, in the late fall. My sense was that those were poorly received.”* (Faculty)
  - *“The more you push sexual response training or SARC prevention training, the more you kind of blow it off – it’s just too much.”* (Faculty)
- Faculty and staff indicated that cadets are as prepared as they need to be for duty upon graduation.
  - *“I think it’s an unrealistic expectation to assume that we as an institution, the Air Force Academy, that we would even give a lieutenant that much responsibility. If something was brought up to them, the commander wouldn’t even have to hand it off. The commander would take it.”* (Military)



## **Chapter 8: U.S. Coast Guard Academy Cadets**

Seven cadet focus group sessions were conducted at USCGA from March 4-6, 2013. Each session was scheduled for a 90-minute period. There was one male and one female session held for freshmen, seniors, and sophomores and juniors combined. A single mixed-gender session of juniors and seniors was also held. Each session had between eight and fifteen students.

### ***Sexual Assault***

The *2013 SAGR* focus groups devoted a majority of the time to topics designed to gather students' perceptions on unwanted sexual contact (USC) and their recommendations for reducing the prevalence. In each topical area the facilitator made an effort to drive out causes for behaviors or situations being discussed and recommendations for improvement.

The discussions began by sharing with the participants the USC rates from the *2012 SAGR* and asking whether cadets had seen those results. Cadets were asked to discuss why the rates have increased across the past four survey years. Additional questions were posed for cadets' knowledge of where incidents were most likely to occur, their thoughts on victims experiencing multiple incidents of USC over time, and the role of "sexting" and pornography. Cadets further contributed comments on the role alcohol plays in USC and when during the day it is more likely to occur.

### ***Familiarity with Incidence Rates from 2012 SAGR***

- **Cadets had seen the results of the 2012 SAGR survey in training sessions.**
  - *"We had a training I think it was about a month ago in the morning where one of the first class came in and he said, 'Here's the results of this survey from a couple years ago.' And he went over some of the procedures for reporting things and then he led some discussion about things that would reduce it, like what this group is doing."* (Male)
  - *"We had one session where they gave us some numbers. They were run by a CASA member."* (Male)
  - *"I presented the trainings. I'm a CASA member. We did mostly the 2012 statistics. If I looked at these ones correctly, we did some of those too. We went over different ways to contact for cases, but it was mostly just a training on the results of the survey."* (Female)

- Cadets indicated the incidence rates for USC seemed high overall.
  - “I think for the everyday interaction category, it seems a little bit high. But if you take into account the upper classmen, what happens when you go out on liberty can be translated into this.” (Female)
  - “Seems really high.” (Male)
  - “I was going to say in comparison to the fact that total DoD is not much higher than us, that's surprising to me. Just because we're such a close-knit or everybody knows each other. So you wouldn't think that that would happen so often; whereas, the other Academies it's a lot larger. I guess I didn't expect our numbers to be as high.” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “I'd like to think it was lower.” (Male)
  - “That seems a little high. It's not a remarkably high statistic, but it's also just – the Academy doesn't really seem like a place where 10 percent of the women would have that experience and it would go without being noticed.” (Female)
- Cadets thought the incidence rates for men seem right.
  - “I think that's right. Good to be less than a percentage point.” (Female)
  - “It doesn't surprise me. I know I do realize it can happen to men. Also it's going to be a lot lower for men than it is for women just because it's always how it's been with patterns.” (Male)
  - “Normal.” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “I was going to say since it is anonymous, I don't feel men would be so worried about something impinging upon their image.” (Mixed Gender Session)
- Some cadets believe that the incidence rates for males are underreported.
  - “Probably.” (Female)
  - “It's really low.” (Male)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist for DMDC to work with the Academy to prepare a briefing or handout of 2012 SAGR and future survey results tailored to the Academy.</li> <li>◆ Another opportunity might exist for the Academy to use the results of the surveys to generate discussion during sexual assault training sessions.</li> <li>◆ During discussions, ask why cadets feel the rates are higher or lower than expected and solicit their ideas for addressing sexual assault.</li> <li>◆ Engaging cadets in discussions and problem solving helps give them a sense of involvement and ownership of solutions.</li> </ul>

- Cadets indicated that it is hard to know USC situations occur at the Academy because offenders are good at hiding their behaviors.
  - “I've never seen anything ever.” (Male)
  - “If something happens here, we are very, very good at hiding it. People don't know about it. People don't see it.” (Male)
- Some cadets believed that the USC offender in male cases would also be male.
  - “I think it's more likely to be male honestly.” (Male)
  - “Well, at least from my high school, I don't have the same interactions as much here. But joking around, that was big where I was from. There very well could be someone who isn't accustomed to interactions from our high school, someone who I'm friends with now. They might say that's weird, but not a big deal.” (Male)
- Cadets indicated USC rates are influenced by one's “sensitivity” to behaviors.
  - “I think it would be more like the guys will mess around with one another and not think anything of it; however, there is a few percentage that [take offense].” (Male)
  - “I think there are some things that happen to a girl that makes her uncomfortable. They say, ‘Okay, that was unwanted sexual contact.’ So if that happened to a guy, for example, that might not be offensive to them. It would just be, ‘Oh, that happened.’ I don't think it would be, ‘Oh, that was sexual contact.’ Whereas, for a girl it might be, ‘Oh, my gosh, that just happened. That is uncomfortable for me.’” (Mixed Gender Session)
- Cadets offered multiple reasons for the increase in USC rates.
  - “I don't necessarily think that they're maybe really going up. I think that maybe the reporting of it is going up or the people coming forward saying things actually happened are going up because it's becoming less of a stigma against people that bring up their sexual assault cases.” (Female)
  - “I think maybe another explanation, which might not be completely separate or, say that, being okay with reporting is becoming more acceptable, but I feel there's also an increase on pressure, specifically on women, to be okay with any contact. And I don't think we're becoming more okay with that. So there might actually be



*more contact that people allow, and then they're like, 'Geez, I really didn't feel like doing that.'” (Female)*

- “*I have no idea, but I do know our society in general is just becoming hypersexualized compared to the past. So that might be leading to things getting a little bit high. If you look at tabloid magazines, there are sex scandals all across there. If you look at the women's magazines, the first thing on the front is the 50 great sex things. You watch reality TV, you watch most of our sitcoms that we see nowadays, you watch That Seventies Show, they didn't have anything involving sex or anything like that. Then you look at today's shows, the Secrets of the American Teenager is literally all about girls in high school getting pregnant. And so just a more open and progressive society now.” (Female)*
- “*Here it might just be because there are more women here now. Every year, awesome, most women in every class ever, every single year.” (Male)*
- “*I think it might just be that more people are reporting it. I can honestly say I don't think it's a generation has a sudden increase culture of violence or disrespect or something. I think with this multitude of trainings and people say it's okay to talk about it, it's okay to report it, more people who have had the same experiences as those before them can talk about it.” (Female)*
- “*Throughout the years in the military as a whole, it seems as though this is semi-related, but don't ask, don't tell. That was a big one, so it's sort of protection for those who want to admit something. So I think over the years, I guess, if you say something, I guess it's guaranteeing that the military has your back. You're not going to get kicked out of the military. Whereas before, especially after all these new laws came into play and everything, it might not have been as comforting until – there always has to be someone go first. And when you see a bunch of people doing it, you're going to feel comfortable doing it as well typically. So I think it's not following the crowd wanting to be sexually assaulted but understanding if it does happen and if seeing other people that might have gone through it as well and seeing they're okay, it might allow you to admit or report it.” (Female)*

### ***Location of Unwanted Sexual Contact***

- Cadets indicated the majority of on campus incidents occur in the barracks.
  - “*Rooms.” (Female)*
  - “*I would assume Chase Hall. Besides Chase Hall, the only other buildings are academic buildings.” (Male)*
  - “*Where there are not a lot of people or eyes watching. When we're out at bars, all your friends are out. Everyone's looking out for you. Back at Chase Hall, it's a different story.” (Male)*

- “*Late Saturday night [after coming back from the bar].*” (Male)
- “*With the door closed.*” (Female)
- “*It would definitely be Chase Hall.*” (Male)
- “*That's where we all live.*” (Female)
- “*I was going to say we spend almost all of our time here because we have to. So probably the majority of the cases are going to happen here because we just spend almost all of our time here, 90 percent of the time.*” (Male)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist for additional surveillance and security policies (e.g., locked door policies) to help prevent incidents.</li> <li>◆ Another opportunity might exist to raise awareness among cadets that many of the unwanted behaviors occur right in their own living area, generating greater attention to surroundings and watching out for each other (greater bystander intervention in cadets' living area).</li> </ul>

- **Cadets indicated that people can easily enter the barracks.**
  - “*If someone came, anyone can walk into our barracks. Eventually if it keeps progressing the incline the way it's been doing, it will probably be other people outside the Academy. And literally anyone can walk [into the barracks] – there's a sign that says they're not allowed.*” (Female)
  - “*It doesn't happen, but it technically could. The gate security isn't that great. You can drive on base. 'I'm picking up a cadet.' All doors are unlocked.*” (Female)
  - “*All the doors are open. They're not locked at night.*” (Female)
- **Some cadets believed strangers would not enter the barracks.**
  - “*I don't think that's a big possibility of a stranger coming in and harassing you.*” (Female)
  - “*It would be too obvious.*” (Female)
  - “*I don't see that happening. I've never seen that.*” (Female)
- **Some cadets believed USC would not occur in the barracks because everyone would hear it.**
  - “*No one really knows what's going on behind closed doors, but at the same time, everyone lives in such close proximity to each other, if something was unwanted, it would be so easy to just get up and go get some help. I don't know necessarily where else it would happen, but at the same time, I can't picture that happening in the barracks.*” (Female)

- “*Living in Chase Hall, literally your rooms are right next to each other. The walls aren't that thick. You hear things that you don't want to hear all the time through your bedroom walls. And, quite frankly, if somebody was being sexually assaulted, you would know about it.*” (Female)
  - “*Just being in a classroom or being in Chase Hall in the middle of the day, I highly doubt anything like that would definitely happen because I feel most people would step in at some point and say, ‘Hey, this person's uncomfortable. You need to knock it off.’ Whereas, if it's on the weekend away from the Academy in a less subdued environment, I feel it's a higher risk.*” (Male)
- **Cadets suggested other locations on campus where USC might occur.**
  - “*In the gym, but that wouldn't be a serious thing. That would just be something someone didn't understand they didn't want to be friends with someone else.*” (Female)
  - “*Study rooms, basically a room that doesn't have beds in it anymore or it does and it's unoccupied and they turned it into a study room for people to use like a quiet place. It's a company-by-company basis, but it's in the barracks.*” (Female)
  - “*If it was a coed group going someplace, I mean sure. If you went far away, got on the bus and traveled away and the entire group was at one hotel, it probably could happen, but most are on their own.*” (Female)
  - “*There's the basement in the library. If they're doing homework at night, they go upstairs to the little cubicles.*” (Female)
  - “*The locker room or on a sports team, different teams form brotherhoods. And they're all super close. And sometimes some guys take it too far and a certain guy doesn't take it as a joke anymore and is like, ‘I don't feel comfortable with this, but might be too embarrassed to bring it up.’*” (Female)
- **Cadets might be more vulnerable to USC during Eagle.<sup>4</sup>**
  - “*It's a lot of people on one small boat.*” (Female)
  - “*With a lot less supervision.*” (Female)
  - “*It happens on Eagle.*” (Female)
  - “[*Do you think it's unwanted sexual contact that happens on Eagle?*] Yes.” (Female)
  - “*Sophomores spend six or five weeks. So it has time to perpetuate and relationships get closer and people think things that they shouldn't.*” (Female)

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<sup>4</sup> Training for rising sophomores. The class is put onto the cutter Eagle for Coast Guard duties.

- “*That's just Eagle. The Swab Summer is eight weeks – seven weeks and one week is on Eagle. The rest the cadres, like second class yell at fourth class and indoctrinate them.*” (Female)
- **Swab Summer might be too supervised for something to occur.**
  - “*That's their basic training. Unless it was a cadre assaulting a fourth class, which is also fraternization, which people really don't like.*” (Female)
  - “*They're in a very controlled environment.*” (Female)
  - “*Supervised 100 percent of the time.*” (Female)
- **On a ship, there might be different dynamics that might increase risk of USC.**
  - “*Ships definitely. Just on my boat, almost two years ago, there were a few people in command got kicked off the ship because of sexual harassment. And so you're out on a ship with a very small amount of people on a very small space. People get stir crazy and people get bored and you start to get too comfortable with each other. And you could see there were a lot of unprofessional relationships going on. So I think it's just the confinement is part of it too.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*I think it becomes a different dynamic when you have enlisted members. With cadets, there's fourth class, first class. You want to keep that separate. But on board the cutter, if something happens between an enlisted and an officer, that's really bad or between a lower-level enlisted and chief, that becomes an illegal issue unless, ‘You're drunk, let me see you to your room,’ more of an investigation type of situation.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*I think it's also an age thing too. Here or at Academy we're at a college, and for the most part there's only four years between all of us. But out there it's the work force. There is a wider range, so people don't feel as close to each other.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **For cadets, their “workday” and personal time all occur in the same room.**
  - “*Basically you're not supposed to have people, well, anyone other than your roommate alone in the room with you with the door closed and then during the workday doors have to be open. But once the workday ends at 1600, then we can have our doors closed. And if it's only two people in the room, then it has to be you and your roommate. Otherwise, you have to have the door open.*” (Male)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist for the Academy to look for ways to provide cadets with more opportunities for social interactions after the workday other than going downtown to bars or to other college campuses.</li> </ul>

- “*I don't think it stops here at all. The fact we live with each other, four o'clock workday is over, people are going to be their own people. It's not the professional environment anymore. So we're going to hear it more. Whereas, in a work environment, you go home at the end of the day and you're not surrounded by all these people. So I think we're going to hear it a lot more than normal.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- “*It's very difficult in an Academy to maintain a professional environment because we have no avenues for nonprofessional environment because this is where we live, work, and do school. Once 1600 hits, that's the end of work. We take off our uniforms. That's when we become the normal people we are. So I think it's very difficult to enforce professionalism at a 24-hour, 24/7 thing.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- “*Call it the switch. You're very professional at this point. Then you're with your friends, and you're usually very different.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that leaving doors open does help prevent USC, but it is not enforced.**
  - “*Most people just shut the door and don't worry about having other people in their room though so....*” (Male)
  - “*We can lock our doors too.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*Most people don't.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*The only way to fix that would be to have the doors open all the time, and we fought so hard to get the doors closed a little bit more.*” (Female)
  - “*Four o'clock, that's it, and then as long as there's a roommate in the room. It's a three-person party, but I know a lot of the cadets don't follow that.*” (Male)
  - “*Also, you're not technically allowed to have the door open if it's just you and your other person in the room, it's not your roommate. I'm sure that rule gets violated all the time. I'm sure everyone has done that. At the same time, if you didn't want to be in that situation where it was just you and some guy alone in a room and you felt uncomfortable, it would be easy to not put yourself in that situation.*” (Female)
- **Cadets noted that there are security patrols in the dorms, but they are not very effective.**
  - “*Security guards usually come through at night. They just walk through the Hall.*” (Male)
  - “*I don't think you can check every single room all night every night.*” (Male)

- “*Hardly. There's a P3 that comes through I think once every hour or two hours. But they have to cover – it's one person going through the entire building – and the OODs, which is a cadet who's watching, is secured at midnight and sometimes earlier. So any time after that one – the P3's not knocking on doors. They're just making sure nothing's going on. So there's nobody watching what's going on in the rooms.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Cadets indicated unwanted events are more likely to happen on the weekend than weekday.**
  - “*Probably Friday from one, maybe a Saturday from twelve to two or three when people are coming back hammered sometimes.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*We have roommates in the room during the week, but weekends people come back by themselves drunk and you don't have that safety net I would say.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*Also, second and first class or juniors and seniors can sign out on a short, so they don't have to come back. But a lot of people do. So the OD might not even know that you're there, so that could contribute to that.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **A “Rape Watch” seems to be too much for cadets.**
  - “*A couple weeks ago Commander McGraw was discussing how other Service Academies are having basically what's called a 'Rape Watch' where someone is on duty all the time throughout the night patrolling the barracks. And basically the consensus the cadets gave her, and that she also agreed with, was that would just be taking it way too far and that would make this place even more prison-like than she already realizes it is. So I think that is just too much. I don't really know what an in between would be.*” (Female)
  - “*I think if you're going to give these into command probably and tell them here are the suggestions, have the 'Rape Watch.' But that's just going to add so much more hatred among the corps. And plus, the men here think that it's all about them having to just always say no.*” (Female)
  - “*I feel it's like living anywhere. If you lived in an apartment building, it would be the same thing. Unfortunately, in my opinion, it's just the way the world is. It's the fact that people even are willing to do something like that, it's going to happen no matter where you are. So I think that locking down Chase would be extreme just because it's going to happen somehow.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Cadets indicated separating genders in dorms may be beneficial to stopping USC.**
  - “*One thing that could be possible, and it's not a guarantee that could lower it, would be to separate men and women by floors or decks. This other school they*

*actually had separate buildings for the men and women, and it was a military school. And that could prevent anything that happens at night or if somebody came back here, had a little too much to drink, and if it was a guy, he would be going to a certain room on a certain floor. And that would prevent it from happening because there shouldn't be any girls on there or not as many females on that floor.” (Male)*

- **Cadets on liberty are more vulnerable to USC.**
  - “*We're allowed do whatever during liberty hours.*” (Male)
  - “*During liberty hours when we're allowed to leave and go places.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated alcohol plays a large role in unwanted behaviors.**
  - “*I would say alcohol is probably the primary driver there. You can get all the training in the world, but if you're not in the correct mind state, then it's not going to help.*” (Male)
  - “*One of my friends said that, she'll come back on the weekends, and sometimes this guy will come back to her room and climb up into the rack with her and hang out there for an hour or two. She doesn't know what to do because he's drunk. She doesn't want to kick him out or something.*” (Male)
  - “*I'm sure alcohol plays a part into sexual coercion. That's not a surprise. It happens here. It happens everywhere else. I think there are fewer individuals who can imbibe, but it still happens.*” (Female)
- **Cadets feel the Academy overall is a very safe environment.**
  - “*It's just the basic take-away here is a very sheltered environment. When we go out to bars, there are at least five other cadets there. You're always safe. You're always with your shipmates.*” (Male)
  - “*It's a delicate balance to be struck. Chase Hall already is a place where you don't have much privacy as a person. So, yes, they could try to increase our safety, but at the risk of stepping on everybody's toes more than they already do. I mean it's a fine line to walk between being protective and being overbearing. And I think the Academy already struggles with that line.*” (Female)
  - “*I feel like we get taught every year a hundred times what we can do if something that happens, restricted, unrestricted, people we can contact and stuff like that. So I think all the measures are in place. It's up to the people to do it.*” (Male)
- **Cadets gave mixed perceptions about vulnerability during summer experiences.**
  - “*I would say it's higher probably out in the fleet because when we go out there, we're used to having the circle and this bubble of protection with our friends here.*

*But if you act the same way at the bar here as you do when you're out on the fleet with a completely new group of people, they might be perceiving that even more so, like you leading them on.”* (Female)

- *“I think environment's a little worse. Especially sexual harassment comments, there's a lot of those, just because everyone has tougher skin out there. It's more of a relaxed environment. It's not like they have trainings at 7 a.m. It's more mandated online.”* (Male)
- *“You hear stories all the time about girls' crew members and stuff. It's very, very common. It happens every summer.”* (Male)
- **Cadets feel unprepared for real world situations.**
  - *“I'm not trying to spread rumors or anything. But the Academy babies us a lot, and we need to be able to handle the same situations that happen in this bubble and handle them in the same way we would handle living in the real world. So I feel in a sense the Academy doesn't really help us in that way because we need to learn on our own how to handle situations without being told this is the exact steps you have to take if this happens to you.”* (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that if people want to engage in sexual activity, they'll find a way on campus to make it happen.**
  - *“I think if these types of behaviors are going to happen, they're going to happen regardless of the rules or what's allowed there, not allowed there. This is a left-hand turn, but I know when Don't Ask, Don't Tell was repealed, now you can have same sex people in the same room with the door closed or guys and girls in the same room with the door closed. And, hey, no one got pregnant. Nothing big amounted to that. Everybody thought that would be the end of the world if you close the door with someone you're intimate with. If these things are going to happen, they're going to happen regardless of any type of regulations going on out there. We're college kids. We want to have sex.”* (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that employing better judgment is the best way to prevent USC. The responsibility belongs to the cadets themselves.**
  - *“So you are going to the bar. You're going to be drinking too. You're going to be giving off signals, and at the end you might not want to have sex with somebody. But if you don't actually say that and you've been dancing with them, you've been laughing and carrying on, how is that male cadet supposed to realize*

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Caution must be taken to avoid any implication of victim blaming in interpreting these comments.</li><li>◆ An opportunity might exist to reinforce the notion that it is wise to assess situations, make limits clear, and stand up for fellow cadets.</li><li>◆ An opportunity also might exist to champion those who intervene.</li></ul>

*that you don't actually want to have sex now unless you actually say no?"*  
(Female)

- “*I think what she's trying to say is everybody needs to take responsibility for themselves. A lot of the survey and stuff is this happened to me and I regret it and it shouldn't have happened, but it wasn't my fault. That happens a lot here with a lot of cases when people get in trouble. They'll do anything to not make it about them or their fault. You're telling me about how people aren't reporting their alcohol, I totally believe that because that would actually say, you have a piece of this puzzle. No one asks for sexual assault to happen, but if you're not going to take responsibility and have a proper awareness, then I don't think you can completely blame other people for random acts of creating sexual assault. It does happen, but I don't think that, especially in service academies, I think those cases are extremely rare where someone goes on to text someone. So I think in the fleet you're going to need to have some responsibility as you do here. And for the most part I think people do a good job of handling that responsibility. But if you don't, then you fall subject to some of these things. And I think learning lessons from that you should take that away too, yes, I didn't ask to have this unwanted sexual behavior, but I didn't do everything I could to prevent it.*” (Female)
  - “*Don't expect people to know what you're thinking. I'm really stuck on this unwanted sexual contact because I tend to think of it as assault as more aggressive and you actually asserted yourself and said stop it. But I think a lot of the times the victim of the situation – which it's a horrible thing. I really do feel for that person. But they need to understand that people are not mind readers. So you kept going with it. You're like, 'You didn't know how to say no.' But you were just expecting this person knows that I don't want to do this. So they should stop. But you never said anything in the meantime. And that goes for anything. If you want something in life, you can't expect people to know what you're thinking or what you want.*” (Female)
- **If cadets say “No,” the unwanted behavior might stop.**
    - “*I was going to say it doesn't come down to reporting it. It comes down to you communicating to that person, 'Stop. Not okay. Not comfortable.'*” (Female)
    - “*I mean I would step in. I feel everyone else here probably the same thing. If somebody's feeling uncomfortable, obviously they're not going to be able to perform to their best ability. And then also if it was a male who was doing the action to a female, if you do it to that one female, how do you know he's not going to just be quiet about it and if she already talked to the male, she should already understand that he's doing something wrong and if he continues to do it, it should bring it up higher.*” (Male)
    - “*I've seen it before where someone's come out and said, 'Stop talking about that,' and they stop.*” (Male)

- “A huge I think almost 100 percent of people would if they were told to, ‘This is making someone real uncomfortable,’ they think it’s sexually offensive. I think a vast majority of people would respect that. I can’t speak to every single person, but I think that’s the feeling amongst most.” (Male)
- “I also still think the man or woman who was committing the sexual assault really knew that they were committing sexual assault and if they were told by the victim that they were committing sexual assault and it was unwanted, I still think a vast majority would respect that.” (Male)
- “If a cadet claimed rape, I don’t think anyone would really question it. That’s a really high claim to make. I don’t believe anybody would just say, ‘He or she raped me.’ I don’t think anyone here would do that.” (Male)
- “The only reason this behavior goes on is because we don’t really know it exists. I would say if anyone here saw anything like that and interpreted it as sexual behavior, we would put a stop to it. The fact we don’t know what it is, they’re good at hiding it, prevents these numbers from going down. If we knew it existed, we’d stop it.” (Male)

- **Similarly, if cadets say “No” to same-sex USC, the behavior might stop.**
  - “I can’t see any difference on the surface.” (Male)
  - “They would take care of their own gender. If it was a man offending a man, they would just take care of it themselves. Females too I think would take care of themselves.” (Male)
- **Some cadets added that saying “No” or “Stop” does not necessarily end the behavior.**
  - “I would say it’s probably maybe half and half. Some people might just think their behavior is acceptable if it’s like locker room behavior. And everyone here already is smart, so if they’re told that it’s not acceptable, they’re going to get the picture and be okay that’s not something I should be doing. And then there’s the other people that maybe just don’t care at all and will continue that. So I think it’s a mix.” (Male)
  - “Also, I was going to say this earlier, but when you tell someone to stop making comments that are inappropriate, they do stop. But I feel a lot of people stop just then. And you hear the same people making comments over and over and over again. And I don’t really know why that is. I guess they think that we’re overly

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to make cadets aware that behaviors progress, especially when people are in close contact with each other and know each other well. Setting clear boundaries upfront is beneficial – change the culture to where it is acceptable to say “no.”

*sensitive or that's just part of how they have been acting for such a long time that one comment isn't going to make them stop. But I think that also sort of says that it's more of a deeper set cultural thing that it's okay to do that to people and you shouldn't really actually respect people who want you to stop. It's more of a 'Shut up so she doesn't yell and get mad of me' sort of thing."* (Female)

### **Multiple Incidents of Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- Cadets indicated that multiple incidents of USC might be the result of a progression of behaviors.
  - “*Maybe if the touching happens and the person doesn't say anything about it, they don't make a note that it's not wanted, it could escalate from there.*” (Female)
  - “*I could see it being reoccurring or escalation.*” (Female)
  - “*I think it could be multiple possibilities. I don't think we can really say there was a progression because there could have been a progression or it could have been at first it was wanted and then they soon started not liking that person so it was unwanted. So then they just considered the beginning wanted as unwanted now that they look back at it or something like that. So you can't really just say, 'Oh, it happened this way or something.'*” (Female)
- Cadets indicated they would expect most offenses of USC to be committed by the same person.
  - “*Most likely.*” (Female)
  - “*I assume it was the same person because if someone commits a sexual act with another cadet and then it goes through all the way, maybe they'll come back again.*” (Male)
  - “*I think it's the same person more often than not. Someone's willing to show that once and they know they got away with it, nothing is stopping them from doing it again. With no barriers and no repercussions, there's nothing to deter them.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*Usually the same offender. But I mean anything's possible. It could be harassed by multiple people. But I don't really think there are too many people out there that do that stuff.*” (Female)
- Cadets offered reasons why someone might experience multiple offenses.
  - “*The guy who does it is one person, and I can see them maybe trying with another. Sometimes it's also the motive behind that person. If they really like the girl, or the guy, and they didn't stop them and they continue with them. I would guess if that individual was a little bit more – sick, he would probably go off barracks. So it's a mix.*” (Female)

- “It’s probably ignorance in most cases, knowing the people who are here, having a good sense of the people. And when you’re in a big box like this, or not so big, the way you see things changes. And so you get caught in this weird mindset. And it’s hard to explain, but things just seem different when you’re doing them than they would if we were somewhere else, if we could do everything we wanted all the time, not be in military academy. So I would say usually people just don’t see the signs that they probably would see, the, ‘Oh, I’m going to push you away,’ but they don’t really see that. They just think maybe it’s fun. A lot of people are just not cognizant of the other person’s reactions here.” (Female)
  - “Different women are going to react differently to whatever this person’s doing so [they stay with the same one].” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that reporting one incident on the survey makes you more likely to report having another.**
  - “I would think that someone that would report one incident would be more inclined to report more than one.” (Male)
  - “I would report, but then she might not report. If you report something small, then you’re definitely going to report something bigger; whereas, if you don’t say anything after someone says something derogatory to you, you might not report something else.” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that alcohol plays a major role in irresponsible behavior.**
  - “I would think it’s a lot higher than 60 percent of the time.” (Female)
  - “If there’s alcohol involved, you need to say no. You can’t have sex with her. But they’re drinking too. So and when they’re reading these signals that the person they’re looking to get intimate with is also giving them all these signals over and over, they’re drinking and they’re also inhibited, you can’t tell the guys, no, you can’t have sex.” (Female)
- **Cadets noted that different types of offenses might be more difficult to report.**
  - “It’s also not uncommon for people who have experienced something more traumatic to freeze up and be really scared. So if something has happened to you, a lot of girls – if a big guy’s done something, a big guy comes to you again, you just can’t move and then control’s released from there. I think that has a lot to do with the fear of it all.” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “People would be more inclined to report an attempted rape or rape. Especially if alcohol’s involved and there’s some touching or something, the person may not want to make a big deal because the environment or maybe they think, ‘Oh, what if I’m overreacting?’, possible side effects of being ostracized by everyone. Unless it’s a clear-cut thing, this is definitely wrong, he or she should not be doing this and probably wouldn’t be reported.” (Mixed Gender Session)

- “A lot of times we are so close. So if someone does something to you it's not, ‘Oh, my gosh, you're a terrible person, because they're still your friend.’ You know it's maybe the alcohol or the setting that threw you off a little bit. Until it becomes a rape scenario, they're still your friend.” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “I think one thing you also have to understand with the whole military punitive side of this is that we are going to be more afraid to express that there has been unwanted sexual contact if it does go to some sort of extent where one person would need to report it because punishments, as we all know, have been on both sides, whether it's the accused or the accuser. So people are just not going to say anything because the system is not a helpful system.” (Male)
- **Because most situations are not clear cut, cadets need to establish clear boundaries.**
- “It can be one guy and you have a close relationship with that person and it's very confusing because the female doesn't actually even know what her own feelings are for this person. And that guy is confused because this female is confused, and there's all this gray matter where people just need to sit down and talk to each other.” (Female)
  - “A lot of it is almost in the eye of the beholder. Something I say that might be considered harassment to someone else wouldn't be. Maybe the training should focus on if you're being offended, just good ways to let the other people know. Because I think if anyone ever said, ‘This is offensive, people would stop.’ But not everyone gets that opportunity.” (Male)
  - “That's the thing. It's really awkward to tell one of your classmates or someone you work with and go to school with and live with that they're making you uncomfortable, that they're doing something that makes you uncomfortable because that causes more uncomfortability. And so I think it could also have to do with someone could do something to me and I would feel awkward saying not to, and so me not stopping it – it can become a cycle where it happens again. You don't want to say anything. That's where you get those multiple occurrences.” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “If people don't report it right away and just tell the person, ‘Hey, don't touch me like that. That makes me uncomfortable,’ people would be, ‘Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't know.’ I feel a lot of it is a misunderstanding on both sides, not just unwanted on one side and evil intentions on the other. I know last year someone got kicked out for massaging a girl's shoulders but she interpreted that as

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to remind cadets that USC is still a crime even if it is not perceived as that serious or the offender is a “nice person.”
- ◆ Another opportunity might exist to remind cadets that if one person allows unwanted behaviors to continue, the offender may try again, possibly with others.

*unwanted sexual contact and reported it. And the guy might not have even known. If someone massaged my shoulders, I wouldn't necessarily think it's sexual.”* (Male)

- “*I'm not saying anything's okay or anything, but I think a lot of the guys go through this phase where it's three months of seeing girls in uniform, and then they just go crazy. Friendships are brought too close here sometimes where it's just they become too close as friends, so the guys think it's okay to do something.*” (Females)
- **Cadets agreed that if an incident is reported, the perpetrator would be punished.**
  - “*In the big number of things people are doing this and their names are not associated with anything. But if any of us was to find out something was going on or someone was to come to us and say they had a problem with anyone in this room, I am pretty confident, or at this school, would do something about it. It's not acceptable. We would all confront them or somehow deal with it. It wouldn't just be brushed off the shoulder. I think these people not reporting, in this instance sexist behavior, they're not really that offended by it. But when something does happen, I think that we all do take care of the situation and deal with it appropriately.*” (Female)
  - “*I would say in this environment people are very afraid of punishment reprisals.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that perpetrators will continue behaviors, or progress the severity of their behaviors, if not told to stop.**
  - “*Well, if you're not going to report it, the odds of you telling other people about it are not going to be very high. So say it was five. Say if all five females didn't report it, odds of them saying to one of the other five, ‘Hey, this happened with this guy,’ is going to be slim. So it's going to allow it to keep continuing.*” (Male)
  - “*Also atmosphere, conversation whenever this topic's brought up, the whole room goes silent. You get really awkward and really uncomfortable. So women who've had or even men who have had these instances happened to them, it's taboo talking about it. So God forbid if someone comes to you to talk about it or realizes someone's doing this, the conversations aren't happening. So they're even less likely to be caught.*” (Mixed Gender Session)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to encourage cadets to set boundaries and report inappropriate behaviors when they happen.
- ◆ Another opportunity might exist to inform cadets that some perpetrators misread signals or simply are not aware that their behaviors are unwanted.

## **Sexting, Pornography, Flirting, and Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- Cadets indicated that sexting can be seen as an invitation to additional behaviors.
  - “*If you're sexting someone, you're giving them the go-ahead. So if that's the case, that's just what it is. If you're giving somebody a big, big clue, 'I'm into you,' then you let it happen. But then you're not? You're giving some mixed signals. That's when I think it comes down to women letting men do that to us not necessarily, if they get the signal, they're going to do it.*” (Female)
  - “*It's when you sex't back 'Stop.'*” (Female)
  - “*Or you show everyone the text, they're going to be pretty embarrassed. I feel there are plenty of ways girls will find a way to make it stop, especially embarrassment.*” (Female)
  - “*In the only case I've heard of that happening here, the guy actually did get kicked out. He's gone after a couple girls came forward with it. He's gone. The Academy took a zero tolerance rule on it.*” (Female)

## **Sexual Harassment and Sexist Behavior**

This major section of the focus groups posed a hypothesis about the relationship of verbally offensive behaviors, such as sexual harassment and sexist comments, on USC. The facilitator began similar to the first section of the focus groups by sharing results from the 2012 SAGR on rates of sexual harassment and sexist behavior at the Academy over the past three surveys and hearing cadets' reactions. Cadets also provided thoughts on the subjective nature of these behaviors and why they are offensive to some and not to others. The facilitator then gave additional findings based on 2012 SAGR that those men and women who experienced USC in the past year also tended to experience sexual harassment and sexist behavior at higher rates. Cadets commented on the possible relationships among these unwanted gender-related behaviors and what the impact might be of addressing the verbal behaviors and possibly reducing USC. Following up, the facilitator asked if cultural factors, such as attitudes of disrespect toward women, contributed to USC. This section ended with a discussion of the possible progression in severity of behaviors.

## **Familiarity with Incidence Rates from 2012 SAGR**

- Cadets indicated that the sexual harassment incidence rates seem high, but they make sense.
  - “*I would say that's relatively high when you think about this four out of ten women feel that way.*” (Female)
  - “*It makes sense. I mean it shouldn't be this way, but it makes sense that the female sexual harassment number is so high, especially considering we're very outnumbered, even though we're the highest percentage of females at any of the*

*service Academies. But when you're outnumbered, you're generally considered one of the guys. So it just happens all the comments around you and stuff.*" (Female)

- *"I think the verbal stuff would naturally have a higher rate than other stuff. So that's why the number's a lot higher than the statistic on [USC]."* (Female)
- *"Seems high. But all of us are pretty critical of percentages – I think it would be more powerful if we saw numbers since we have a small pool of people here. A few people I feel could make that jump up pretty high. I'm not sure if that's true or not."* (Male)
- **Some cadets indicated sexual harassment incidence rates are lower than expected.**
  - *"Surprised it's not higher."* (Male)
  - *"I'm going to say that I'm surprised that it's only 40 percent not 100 percent women. I'm pretty sure you can take a sports team, locker room, if you broadcast whatever you're talking about in the locker room to anyone outside who hears it, it probably go under this sexual harassment thing. Because what guys say between guys, if another person walks by, sometimes just out of context could be taken as sexual harassment or sometimes even with context could be taken as sexual harassment."* (Male)
  - *"Just what is said as opposed to how it's implied or intended, that's probably a little low."* (Female)
- **Cadets indicated sexual harassment incidence rates might be higher for freshmen.**
  - *"I think that these rates would be higher as freshmen because coming from high school, you're not as accustomed to it as maybe you are as a senior. As a senior you know people's personalities better. You know there are people in our class that are that type of personality that will say something like that. You don't take it as offensively as when you don't know someone. Why are you saying that in front of me?"* (Female)
  - *"Well, the only thing I can think of is that at least in my year, because we haven't gotten to know each other more – people haven't established themselves other than just based on what they're admitted to. So there was one girl last year who*

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to promote education on what qualifies as sexual harassment and sexist behavior, in conjunction with USC, to encourage more students to report issues they experience, thus discouraging future harassment behaviors.

*just didn't perform during the summer. She didn't perform very well at prep school. And it was, 'How did you get in here?'" (Male)*

- **Cadets commented on the increase in USC and decrease in sexual harassment.**
  - *"I think it's interesting that as far as our Academy is concerned, the unwanted sexual contact increased, but then the harassment decreased from year to year." (Male)*
  - *It didn't really make sense to me that physical contact went up without other stuff going up because I would think any other abuse it starts smaller, then works its way up. Because the physical to me sounds like the worst-case scenario. So I mean maybe it's because someone that has had physical contact is more focused on that and, therefore, doesn't see the rest of the stuff that has happened. (Female)*
  - *"Unless people are desensitized to the verbal and focus on the physical because that's what affects them the most and that's what gets reported." (Female)*
- **Cadets feel that one's background and sensitivity affects whether behaviors are perceived as sexual harassment or sexist behavior.**
  - *"If we don't look into the people who are having these feelings or who are repeatedly having these instances and these occurrences happen, are they coming from broken families? Are they coming from damaged childhoods where the cycle to repeat negative lifestyle choices and to just fall into that trap and not know how to get out really is just perpetuating itself? I know I was taught in a very strong home to always stand up for yourself. So I never feel – even when anyone says something, I just say stop it. But how many of these people are we taking the time to actually help them so that they can stand up for themselves and to stop this cycle that is continuing to happen to them?" (Female)*
  - *"I also think it works both ways in terms of the person who is perceiving those things as well. Usually if you're going to perceive something to be sexual harassment, most likely probably verbal sexual harassment, then you're probably more inclined to also perceive something else to be sexist verbally as well." (Male)*
  - *"I think the person's more cognizant of taking those things offensively. But I also think it could possibly be the offender as well." (Male)*

#### OPPORTUNITY

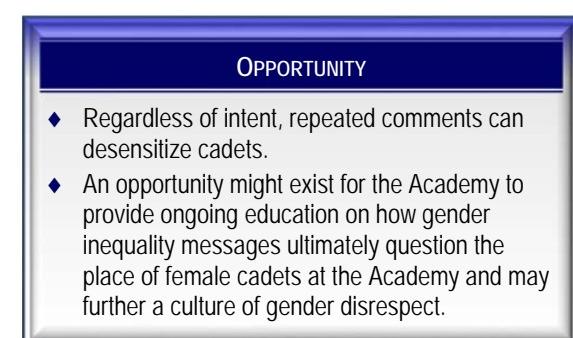
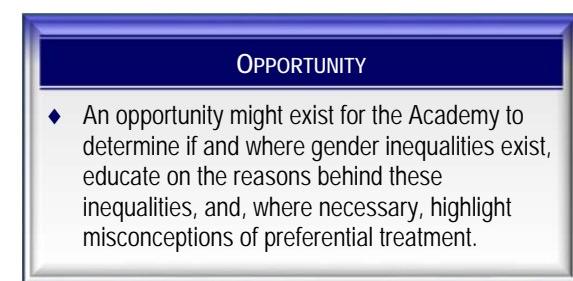
- ◆ An opportunity might exist to facilitate discussions of the relationship of unwanted gender-related behaviors and sexist comments to more aggressive unwanted sexual behaviors to increase awareness of the need for civility and respect no matter the context.

- “I think that a level of tolerance among both genders, but I can think of several people I know personally who are very sensitive to this topic in general. So they might perceive a sole or harassment or sexist behavior much more amplified. So I’m not to say they’re looking for it, but that the slightest thing could set them off. Now, as far as all of them happening to the same person, I’m not sure why, that might disprove what I’m thinking.” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated incidents of sexual harassment are most likely to happen in the barracks.**
  - “I want to say that like 95 percent of this happens on Saturday nights in the barracks.” (Male)
- **Cadets believe that crude and offensive behaviors were the most common offenses.**
  - “But I feel the most common sexual harassment I would think people would mark is the crude and offensive behavior. I wonder if that was in its own percentile how much of that 40 percent would be of that crude and offensive behavior. I feel that’s probably the majority of where people are marking that as sexual harassment.” (Female)
- “The way they painted it in the past few years, something might not necessarily be directed towards you, but still the statement of it could be offensive to sexual harassment. It’s context, just overhearing it in general.” (Mixed Gender Session)
- “This whole locker room talk, this is one whole big locker room. It’s a bunch of guys. That’s what it turns into. At some point it’s socially acceptable. People talk like that because that’s the environment, and it perpetuates itself. Then people who don’t say anything separate themselves from the situation, and there’s little to no rectifying of that situation to stop it in the future.” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated some offenses result from perceived inequity because of gender.**
  - “As admissions here is trying to get very high numbers of diversity, including females and stuff, I think sometimes too there are comments about you got in because you’re a girl or we get special treatment because we’re a female.” (Female)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist for the Academy to create an environment that challenges individuals who exhibit crude, offensive behaviors.
- ◆ Another opportunity might exist to convene a workshop of cadets to generate ideas of how they might address the issue of crude and offensive behavior. Strategies developed by cadets would help with accountability and “ownership.”

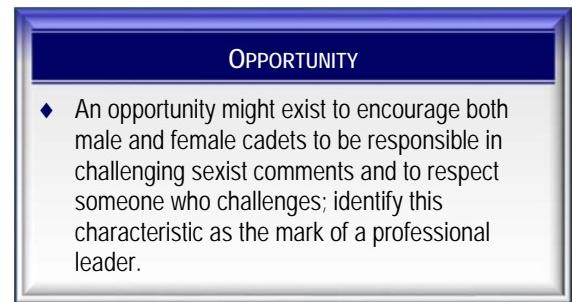
- “*I think a lot of it might stem from the fact that there's only a certain amount of people here. And if you see a woman who's not really able to perform to the same standards as all the other guys, people may think they shouldn't be here because other people are more qualified to be here. If there are girls who couldn't do a single push-up, why are they here? That might be a route.*” (Male)
- “*When you're swabs you're all equal and going through pain together. But then the difference is between men and women at service academies and here. When there are differences, there are huge ones, PFE standards and certain standards for our uniforms and everything. And when there is sexist behavior, it's even bigger because of that distance. And most sexist comments that I hear it has to do with the fact that women are different than men, the guys being upset that the physical fitness standards are so radically different. I'll sit there going, 'No, you're right, probably shouldn't be there.' But the comment is sexist because of the difference.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Male cadets indicated that perceived inequality between genders leads to lasting feelings about women in the military.**
  - “*None of them can do any push-ups, some sort of.*” (Male)
  - “*Generalizations are based more on performance. However, if you find someone who is low performing and they're say a minority, then the generalization on that specific minority [compounds].*” (Male)
  - “*I think a lot of people associate girls getting off easier with guys on mast. Everyone thinks it's less than peer, so they want to keep them around more. I've seen from past girls get off a lot easier than guys.*” (Male)
- **Cadets develop a thick skin toward crude and offensive gender-related behavior since there is rarely mal-intent.**
  - “*I think too, not even just our culture, but the mindset nowadays is to have tough skin and try not or try to not let anything verbal get to you. And it's been instilled as the generations have gone on, especially with us here, we're told to grow thick skin and just let things roll off our back. So I feel*



*the nonphysical remarks are handled a little bit better than anything physical is.”*  
(Female)

- “*I feel a lot of times, too, if you're not comfortable around people who tend to say things like that, the locker room talk, then maybe you just won't hang out with the jocks. So there's definitely ways to avoid these types of situations. Should they tone it down when they're around ladies? Yes. But do I think they need to put on this proper face? No. We all live here. This is their house just as much as it's our house. If I'm going to talk to her about girl things in the hallway, why can't they talk about boy things in the hallway?”* (Female)
  - “*I guess it just doesn't really bother me, the comments that I hear in the weight room and stuff, because it doesn't really bother me what other people say about me because they don't know me. So why would I care? Because it's going to happen in the weight room. I didn't feel offended by it.”* (Female)
  - “*They're not trying to sexually harass you, but I think it depends how the girl takes it. They're guys. There's not very many girls here, and they feel like they just build it all up and take it out on us, I guess. But it depends on how someone interprets it whether they feel threatened or uncomfortable or if they think the guy's just joking.”* (Female)
  - “*A lot of the comments are not directed directly at my behavior or my personality or me as a person. It's just like a joke. And if I let it bother me, then I have to let everything bother me.”* (Female)
- **Cadets had mixed reactions to sexist behavior rates.**
    - “*Seems high.*” (Male)
    - “*Really high.*” (Male)
    - “*It's true.*” (Female)
    - “*It's not surprising.*” (Female)
    - “*I think it's really an accurate number. I think it's low because we all hear it. But I think if you were to ask them, ‘Were you offended?’ That would go down way lower because we're a family. I really can't imagine more than two or three people that actually would want to be mean when they say it to me or to anyone else. I don't see anyone trying to be offensive. It would be just a joke.”* (Mixed Gender Session)
    - “*That's what I was expecting.*” (Female)
    - “*I'm surprised. The men's seems high.*” (Female)

- “*This one doesn't surprise me because if you just look at the military as a whole, you look at our uniforms that we wear for formals, the third and fourth class are required to wear, they're designed to look better on men, just as holdovers from how it used to be. And then you also get, looking at the men's side of things, at how we hear a lot about gender equality now, that almost sort of blames us for being men. So I know personally there are times when I felt like someone's telling me that it's my fault that this is how something is. I didn't have anything to do with it.*” (Male)
- **Female cadets indicated male cadets would stop sexist behaviors if asked.**
  - “*For the most part I would say so.*” (Female)
  - “*I think because there is such a high percentage of males at the Academy, when there is a group of girls around, the guys tend to act better, and they wouldn't say these things. Or if they were offended, they would stop. I think that's just because of the number of girls here. They respect that.*” (Female)
  - “*I think there are two sides to it. On one side there is this very macho attitude, to some degree because of just sheer numbers of guys. There are way more of them than there are of us. And that's the cultural norm for them. So they do have that rowdy behavior that after a while, sometimes it's exhausting just hearing the same comments and you're, ‘Okay, shut up. That's not funny anymore.’ But at the same time, there's a culture of almost protectiveness. So it's this double-sided thing where on one side they're really rowdy and they say these things that you find really annoying and obnoxious sometimes. But on the flip side, if anything ever happened to you and you told one of them, they would go out of their way to try to help you or protect you or stand up for you. It's a weird cultural thing, but they make fun of us, but then at the same time they would do pretty much anything they could to take care of us if they had to.*” (Female)
- **Female cadets indicated they are not afraid to say something about sexist behaviors, nor should they be.**
  - “*I think don't be afraid to call people out. As a freshman it's hard to do that, and that's something we eventually learn and become more comfortable with as you spend time here. But don't be afraid to call someone out and tell them to stop.*” (Female)
  - “*We don't tolerate it as women. I don't tolerate anyone saying something like that to me. I'm speaking for myself, but I know a lot of my peers have done that as*



*well. I feel that's something that's a common trend is we are becoming or we are strong women and more vocal and just more defensive about our position and who we are and how we've earned it.” (Female)*

- **Cadets feel that immaturity is a major factor in improper behaviors.**
  - “*We're also a lot younger too. We're immature. So adult men probably act a little bit more professional even when they are out drinking or this or that or can bite their tongue a little more; whereas, our guys here, half the time they're making fun of us, but in a brotherly way, when they say sexist things.” (Female)*
  - “*I think another time we forget a lot of times the majority of us are 18-, 19-, 20-year-olds, and we may be in the Coast Guard and working for the government and the military and so we're technically adults. But that doesn't mean that our brains are adult or our bodies are adults. So you're not always going to act as if you're an adult because your body hasn't matured to that level yet. Your brain doesn't think you're an adult yet. So you're going to do things that are wrong. You're not going to realize the consequences of your actions every time you make an action. So we can't be expected to do that always.” (Female)*
- **Some cadets indicated a person’s beliefs cannot change, but their behavior can.**
  - “*I think mostly for the talking part. Everybody would say something. Where teachers are favoring guys or girls, you can't do anything about sexist behavior that way. Talk anybody can do something about, but you can't change the way people feel.” (Female)*
- **Cadets indicated that some improper behaviors are based on competition.**
  - “*I think a lot of it is competition based because it's coming around that time everyone wants their assignments, and as far as being a better ship driver, but the guys want to prove they're really good at that. If they say something, it might not be because you're a girl. You're actually better than me, and I feel stupid.” (Female)*
  - “*I think a lot of it is with flight school and the quotas of male versus females, so I think that has a lot to do with it.” (Female)*
- **Upperclassmen do not often hear inappropriate language from lower classmen.**
  - “*I don't hear a lot of underclass saying inappropriate things in the hallway.” (Female)*
  - “*They know better than that.” (Female)*
  - “*I think they learn their lesson fast over Swab Summer. If they look at a female cadre as less than their male cadre, they will get called out instantly and regret it. Then they will realize because they look up to those male cadre and say they*

*respect their female cadre. Because I think they initially have that respect for that male cadre. So if they see that male cadre having respect for that female cadre – they're already being taught that initially when they get here.”* (Female)

- “*Well, since we're supposed to be pretty professional with most upper class, I don't think around us they're not cracking any jokes or anything really often. Sports teams are exceptions. You can get closer there. But in Chase Hall, in your day-to-day interactions with upper class, you're not in a setting where they're going to make jokes or anything really. They set a fairly good professional example I'd say.*” (Male)
- **Upperclassmen are not as restricted to campus, which benefits them socially.**
  - “*I think also upper class we can leave. We can leave on Saturday and not come back until Sunday. We have more time to get away; whereas, third class, they spend every single night in Chase Hall. And that's why I think we see more drinking in the barracks. Those cases are normally third class. And then we said alcohol breeds unwanted sexual contact and attempted rapes and things like that. So I think that just the fact that people have to stay here all the time – this is where most of the things happen, and this is why it breeds that happening – they can't get away from the life here. There's no separation between professional and whatnot, and it just makes it so much easier to....*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*Fourth class can't leave Friday night. They have to stay here. Saturday they can't leave till usually about twelve o'clock. They have to be back at one in the morning. Then Sunday they can leave at seven-thirty. Then they have to be back at six. Whereas, for us it's we can leave Friday night, come back at twelve. Then we can leave Saturday morning and come back Sunday at seven. So there's a big difference in how much time you have to actually form a social life.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Cadets indicated that behavior at the Academy is a reflection of society in general.**
  - “*I think it's pretty commonplace in society in general today. Unfortunately, your sex, your gender, and your ethnicity happen to be the easiest dividing factors between people. So more often than not, we specifically associate behaviors with that. And so given that, I probably would have expected it to be a little bit higher here because I can't go outside without hearing some joke about women or something.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*I have a hard time thinking that we can solve this problem just because of the fact that all of us are born and grown up in regular societies around people and the media where it's becoming more like a social norm to see these things. And every week it seems like someone goes out and shoots up a school. The world is changing because I see that on TV and then it happens in reality. So I have a hard time thinking here at the Academy we can completely change because we've*

*come from all different backgrounds and seen so many different things we're starting to accept as social acceptance. Where I think we can change our ideas by the time we graduate, or hopefully change those, but I don't think at the Academy there's going to be a definite moment where we just fix the problem."* (Female)

### **Attitudes of Disrespect**

- **Many cadets indicated they are treated fairly regardless of gender.**
  - *"I think overall the Academy does a really good job at looking out for people, and we're taught that culture at initially when we get here. We learn ship, shipmate, self. So you're always looking out for other people."* (Female)
  - *"We're in a male-dominated environment, so there isn't so much negative attitude toward men because it's a bunch of men."* (Female)
  - *"I'd say the general attitude is pretty fair. As long as you pull your weight, no one really cares if you're a man or a woman. But as soon as you start shit bagging, then people will take notice and they might attribute something to as just being lazy or trying to get out of work."* (Male)
  - *"I wouldn't say disrespect of women is increasing in the military."* (Female)
  - *"I would say physical contact, while that may be increasing, I don't think the level of disrespect for women is increasing."* (Female)
  - *"I wouldn't say to men in general. Maybe specific ones, but I don't think there's like gender disrespect."* (Female)
- **Cadets noted there is a difference between intentionally committing a crime and unintentionally making someone feel uncomfortable.**
  - *"The whole jump that we talked about, I think there's a deeper rooted problem. People who do commit unwanted sexual contact, there is a difference between ignorance and then just being sick, where that line is drawn."* (Female)
  - *"We discussed in a meeting a situation where a girl didn't speak up about the fact that the touching she was receiving or the massage she was receiving was unwanted. And I think we can't also jump to the fact that the person necessarily committing the unwanted sexual contact is sick or psycho because that person may not even know that the contact is unwanted. In that situation, the arm massage or the shoulder massage was considered unwanted sexual contact. But she didn't say anything, and he didn't know it was unwanted. So I think that we should just not try to jump to the fact that maybe this person is deranged."* (Female)

- Cadets indicated a lot of cultural problems are a holdover from the older generation.
  - “*I think a lot of the stuff – I've never really experienced anything sexist here, but with the fleet and stuff I think a lot of it is in the older generation. And I think a lot of these people are getting phased out with the new culture they're trying to build in the Coast Guard.*” (Female)
- Several female cadets commented that the military culture is progressing slowly toward greater acceptance of women in the military and change is happening.
  - “*We are progressing. But you can't just stop natural human behavior and think everything's going to be fine, we're going to be able to interact with people and talk about, look at the weather today or, I really enjoyed going on a run this afternoon. People are just naturally programmed. You just biologically can't stop thinking about sex.*” (Female)
- Cadets feel the culture at the Academy is better than society as a whole.
  - “*Compared to a lot of how society runs, we're better in that regards anyway because you hear statistics one out of three women in your life that's been sexually assaulted. I think it's better statistics here at least. The culture is different.*” (Female)
- Cadets indicated it is easy to identify the “weaker” cadets in terms of performance.
  - “*I think it's from the beginning you see people, you see how they perform, and say within the first week you know how they perform just because all the stuff you've been through. So you can tell from the first week who's going to perform, and you can group the people that are going to perform weakly together.*” (Male)
  - “*I think it's most people have the same opinion on it. There might be a few disagreements because of certain reasons because you don't know something, but I think most people have the same opinion on it.*” (Male)
- Cadets indicated that the Academy views sexual harassment and sexist behavior as an important problem.
  - “*I feel as though we're getting that message more now. It's been spoken about. The union – the Coast Guard says. We just listened to Admiral Pavolonis spoke*



*strongly about it, and we've had people speak strongly about it recently. So we're getting the feel that it is being pinpointed.*" (Female)

- *"I think one of the things the Academy was doing is just getting the cadets involved. Some of them being CASA members and, I heard a story of someone who went to an upper classman and told them that they had unwanted touching. It wasn't sexual but unwanted touching. And she went over to the guy that was doing the touching, gave him a pretty good talking to. But like we're just looking out for each other."* (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that same-sex attitudes of disrespect might occur because of the predominantly masculine environment.**
  - *"I also think since it's mostly men and it is a military base, a lot of the main thoughts are, if you're a male who goes here, you have to do a sport or be good at a sport and you have to have big muscles and be really strong. Not a lot but there are a few men here who aren't good at sports, who can't play things very well, and they're into singing or something. So I think those men probably feel a bit harassed sometimes because they don't get stronger."* (Female)

### ***Relationship to Unwanted Sexual Contact***

- **Cadets do not believe that a progression of unwanted verbal behaviors necessarily leads to USC.**
  - *"Also some of the people I've heard may say sexist comments I couldn't imagine them moving on to the next level."* (Male)
  - *"Obviously I've heard those things, but I can't imagine someone actually taking it a step further."* (Male)
  - *"I think it's gateway drug analysis. Just because somebody would try marijuana doesn't mean they would do crack, but someone who would do crack probably took marijuana."* (Male)
  - *"I think guys are guys and they're going to make jokes. Girls make jokes too. We make just as much jokes about that stuff. And so I think trying to say guys are going to escalate from making jokes to sexually harass a woman or even a man, I think that's way too big of a jump to take. If a person's going to sexually assault someone, they've been on that path for a while."* (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that a progression in severity of sexist behavior is possible, but does not necessarily cause USC.**
  - *"I would say be it crude or offensive behavior or unwanted sexual attention or joking or anything like that, regardless the fact that you were comfortable saying or doing that thing with that individual shows you already objectified them to a certain extent. So it's not that much larger a step to go forward."* (Male)

- “*It's almost like linking a chain. You do one thing. It leads to another; it leads to another; it keeps leading down the path. For instance, if someone's taking harassment then leading to unwanted sexual contact, if you don't stop the problem early enough, say someone starts harassing whether it be sexting, verbal cues, anything like that, if you don't stop it immediately, it may move to eventually assault and then unwanted contact. So there's definitely a correlation there.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that unwanted behaviors are likely to continue or progress if the offender is not told to stop.**
  - “*Some people are socially oblivious. No one tells them that wasn't the right thing to do. So they assume it would be acceptable.*” (Male)
- **Cadets do not believe a lot more can be done by the Academy to prevent sexual harassment.**
  - “*I don't think there are any practical measures you can put in without making other things a lot worse. We can go back to making doors open all the time, which that would probably take away a lot of the sexual – not a lot. But that very well might take away a lot of sexual harassment cases, a measure to find a solution. And right now we're having a ton of sexual harassment trainings, a lot more. I don't even know if it's a positive effect anymore.*” (Male)

### ***Reporting***

The purpose for this section was to gain additional understanding of why, even with all of the emphasis on USC and zero tolerance, cadets are still reluctant to report their experiences. Cadets offered a number of potential reasons, especially the perceived repercussions from reporting. The section ended with cadets providing recommendations to remove barriers to reporting.

#### ***Reporting at the Academy***

- **Cadets indicated the Academy is good at handling reports of USC.**
  - “*The Coast Guard in general handles reported sexual assault cases very professionally and very personably for how it's allowed.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated USC should be reported.**
  - “*I think it should be a lot higher [reporting]. I mean all of them who think they have been sexually assaulted should report it because it prevents other people from that happening to them.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated a variety of people to whom they would report USC.**
  - “*I would just get a CASA member.*” (Male)

- “*I think there are a lot of options out there, and everyone is very aware of the options. So it comes down to the individual person, how they want to respond to it.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that a legitimate USC complaint would yield no social repercussions.**
  - “*If it's a clear-cut, black and white I feel.*” (Male)
  - “*They wouldn't be ostracized. But if it was the gray area, everyone was going to interpret it differently, I can't believe they reported something like that, then they would be ostracized.*” (Male)
- **Some cadets indicated that they had not heard of the USC reports made in the past year.**
  - “*I haven't even heard of seven. I only heard of the one.*” (Male)
  - “*That seems too large.*” (Male)
  - “*The definition of sexual assault is very hazy I feel because there is some like really, really minor cases I know that happened recently they have been reported and everything. The whole case is done and everything. There was no touching involved. It was just the person, the victim, felt like there was the intent of a sexual behavior behind it, just because of the hour of the day. And that was it. So I just feel like it's not an accurate depiction of actual sexual assault because maybe it's different for some people than it is for others.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that if they hear something about a sexual assault they are obligated to report.**
  - “*The very fact they come to you and say that happened is an unrestricted report, and if you don't take it up the chain, then it comes down on you as well. So you have to stay silent or report.*” (Male)
  - “*You are obligated to report anything that you hear or else you'll go down in flames with them.*” (Male)
  - “*We're part of the military chain of command. There are cadets you can go talk to, and they don't have to report. But it's very few. And I mean may or may not know them.*” (Male)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Surveys and focus groups confirm that most cadets talk to their friends and family about experiences of USC.</li> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist to clarify the policy for cadets reporting USC incidents if they become aware of an incident and to consider changes to policies to allow cadets to go to those closest to them for comfort and guidance, if appropriate.</li> </ul>

- “*Done. It would go up. If you hide it, then honor offense comes back later and you'll be kicked out.*” (Male)
  - “*I think it's everyone's responsibility. It's all of ours. If we see something, if we hear something, we're going to act on it.*” (Male)
  - “*Stuff like this I don't think anybody would have a problem turning someone in if they found out someone raped another cadet because we're so tight-knit that we all know that it's just intolerable. I know I wouldn't have any problem.*” (Male)
- **Cadets might not know who to go to if they want to report an incident, but they can get information easily.**
  - “*One of the chiefs is a victims' advocate, and every once and a while at chief's time it will come up in a conversation and people will ask us, just to make sure that we all know that him and Senior Chief McDade and these other people are available to go talk to or we can go talk to the chaplains. So they make it clear who we can go talk to and all the heads they have posted the chaplains numbers and the SARC's phone number. So I think cadets are aware. Even if they don't know who specifically it is, they know how to get the information pretty easily.*” (Male)
- **Cadets would welcome more reporting options.**
  - “*I think those are some options. It would be nice if there were more options because a lot of times they did this, but I don't necessarily want to see them get – I don't want to see them get discharged because they did something, because that ruins their life. So if there's a way around. I don't really know how to do policy.*” (Mixed Gender Session)

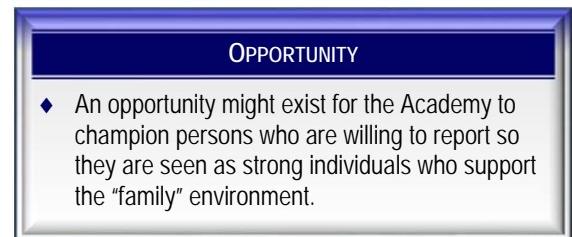
### **Reasons for Not Reporting**

- **Cadets stated that gossip spreading, labeling, and collateral misconduct are major deterrents to reporting.**
  - “*People don't want to be labeled, so they'll just keep quiet.*” (Male)
  - “*Small school and everybody knows each other. So usually especially something that's going to involve that or something disciplinary, everyone usually is going to know and find out. News travels really fast around here.*” (Male)
  - “*I know if I were involved in something, mostly I wouldn't want to put myself out there because then that guy's not only attached to himself, he's attached to a bunch of other people who are probably going to be defensive. And, therefore, you're probably going to make a little bit of some enemies if you do report stuff, so it gets out.*” (Female)

- “*Everything that happens here, because it's such a small community, it's a ripple tank. There are massive repercussions for everything that happens. And it doesn't matter if it's a small incident. If you choose to speak to someone, anyone, or go public with something, you can be assured by the end of the week all thousand cadets will know exactly what happened.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that they are afraid of getting in trouble for reporting.**
  - “*Maybe just for self-preservation they don't want to get turned in because they'll be in trouble.*” (Male)
  - “*You might be able to make the link if someone was, say, sexually assaulted, then there could potentially be the chance they were also doing something wrong.*” (Male)
  - “*Now you are in danger of getting kicked out for doing the right thing.*” (Male)
  - “*So it's you're darned if you do or darned if you don't. That is what is ruling the culture here.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated fearing trouble for alcohol offense when reporting USC.**
  - “*If it was alcohol related, then that could get you in trouble as well. Especially if it's underage, anything that you're not supposed to do here could get you in trouble. Then you have to go sit in front of people, more people, and tell them why you were doing it in the first place essentially.*” (Female)
  - “*It discourages people from reporting anything because they're like, ‘Well, I don't want to get in trouble so....’*” (Male)
- **Cadets weigh the severity of the incident when deciding to report or not.**
  - “*I think it depends person to person. Some people it's just talking to them. It would be, ‘What you did was wrong,’ and getting that positive reaffirmation from the person. For others it's something more serious.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*There's more proof of it being completed than if it's just they tried doing.*” (Female)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist to provide cadets with evidence that reporting stops offenders from further crimes against them or others.</li> <li>◆ Another opportunity might exist to provide more victim care to help mitigate any repercussions if they do occur.</li> </ul>

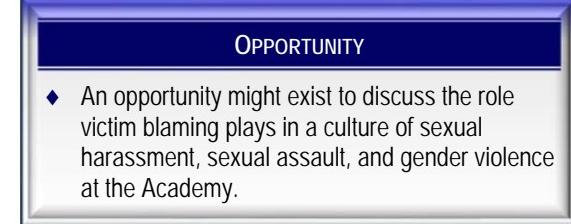
- Male cadets would not be likely to support other men reporting USC incidents, but female cadets would support other women reporting.
  - “*If a guy went to report a sexual assault or was talking about it with his friends, they would be, ‘No, don’t do that.’ They would be, ‘What are you thinking? You just made a mistake.’*” (Male)
  - “*If a girl said that to her friends, ‘Oh get him.’*” (Male)
- Cadets indicated that maintaining the “family” environment is a powerful consideration in reporting USC.
  - “*I think it's about a family environment. I'm much more willing to tell someone or talk to a chief if I feel it's just going to be they care about me, I care about my classmates and the rest of the people with me so I want to make sure this doesn't happen again, instead of an executive order, ‘You shall do this or you shall do that, because of the law.’ I think the atmosphere maintaining this family. If you're getting hurt, I want to know so we can fix this.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*If the individual is victimized in any way, shape, or form and that's why the other individual was kicked out, I think there's a bit more understanding here at the school. But if it's all gray, the individual is intoxicated, pushed him off me but I still said something about it and now they're kicked out, many times they're viewed as, ‘Why did you kick your classmate out? Why did you not demerit that?’ Sense of trust is gone. What else is this person going to say that's going to get someone kicked out?*” (Male)
  - “*My view on it is we're a big Coast Guard family and whatnot, so even the classmates I have that I despise, they're still 2014 and my family. If you are trying to get someone kicked out, it's totally ruining that atmosphere.*” (Female)
- Many cadets would prefer to discuss issues with their peers instead of initiating a report.
  - “*I think one of the only areas that could lead to problems would be maybe reporting it or talking to your peers about it because if you were really close with somebody from the opposite gender, you will be a little more hesitant to approach them with a situation like that. It would be a big brother, big sister mentality. And if I had a big brother, I would rather talk with him about stuff than my sister.*” (Male)
  - “*I actually know of a few cases where it was pretty much sexual harassment that happened and someone went to their mentor, told their mentor about it and kept it*



*really confidential and was like, ‘How do I handle this situation? I’m not about to make a report. I just want to know how you would go about this.’ And just going and talking to the person in a more relaxed environment with lights on and doors open and say, ‘Hey, this is how it made me feel and we’re just friends and stuff,’ especially here, we are taught to communicate more how things make us feel, so just try not to offend anyone or bring it up the chain of command. I feel that’s how a lot of us deal with it, just talk it out and once we settle down and separate it.”* (Female)

- **Cadets indicated they would not report USC because the process is time consuming.**
  - “*And I know this is not going to be the best comment, but we don’t have time to worry about this. We are so busy at the Academy – it’s true though. When something happens to you, unless it is you are physically hurt or you are so unstably damaged you cannot eat and your roommate notices, that is just the nature of the beast. We are not going to worry about it. We are going to brush it off and move on from it. And I know that’s a really unfortunate reality of the Academy and you guys are probably mad at me that I just said it. But it’s true.*” (Female)
  - “*And another, we’re so busy here that taking time to just vent about something what could be talking for maybe five, ten minutes to a friend could lead to a long prolonged process of pending investigations, spending days meeting with your company officer or chief, having to report it up the chain. So do I want to pursue this long and egregious process of actually trying to get something done?*” (Male)
  - “*But I also think that a lot of people don’t do it because of how long it takes.*” (Male)
- **Reporting USC becomes a “big deal” with many potential consequences.**
  - “*I’d say there’s such a difference because it turns into a bigger deal. It’s not just, for instance, a fourth class and a second class having an inappropriate relationship. Well, how long has it been going on? Was there alcohol involved? And so many other things come into play that it turns into a bigger issue, and they’re more scared to report it because of everyone else they’re going to get in trouble, because they’re going to get themselves in trouble. So it’s no longer just, I felt sexually assaulted. It’s, I’m going to get kicked out of school. So they tend to keep that to themselves because of the other consequences that come along with that.*” (Female)
  - “*It’s a pain in the butt. And if there’s a way that you can do it unrestricted – it’s hard with a small school to keep your own business your business. And so to keep things as private as possible I think is the most wanted way.*” (Female)

- “*I feel if any issue, any big issues come up at the school, how they deal with it normally also blows it up bigger than what it was initially. So more people usually get involved. And I feel people don't want that to happen. They don't want their business spread around, and they don't want themselves to maybe be put in jeopardy or someone else that wasn't really involved that might get pulled into it.*” (Female)
- **Cadet reactions to a report or behavior depend on who the victim and offender are.**
  - “*Depends on who. Depends on who did it.*” (Male)
  - “*So if a girl is very sexually active, then she reports something like that, it would be less credible because she's had many encounters. Guywise, if he has a reputation for doing the same thing, like there's some people who I would be less surprised if I found out that they had done that, committed a sexual assault than others.*” (Male)
  - “*But if you're going all night and you're flirting all night, chatting up, even with somebody you go to school with, you don't talk to all the time, you're having a good night. You guys share a cab back. All of a sudden something happens. You're not on board anymore. Now it's sexual harassment. If you make decisions throughout the night that lead you in one direction and then if you're going down a path, you're going down a path. I don't think you can hit a bridge and – you can't all of a sudden say now you're being sexually harassed if all night you're making these implications, if you're implying things are going to happen and then – you need to make preventative actions. That's on us. That's on the female. You need to know your own boundaries, and you should be able to not act in a certain way to not lead you into a bad situation.*” (Female)
- **Some cadets would rather take care of the situation themselves.**
  - “*If you can handle it yourself, why am I going to go tattle to my chief about it? If I can take care of it myself, I'm not going to tell anybody about it.*” (Female)
  - “*You don't report it if you think you can take care of it. That's my thing. If I think I can handle it on my own, I'll handle it on my own. I'll try to take care of it myself.*” (Female)
  - “*It's embarrassing. It's humiliating. You don't want to admit that something like that happened to you. Even though you're just reporting it to your seniors, you want to be able to present yourself as a strong person. Especially as a female,*



*you want to say, ‘I’m becoming an officer. I have what it takes to do my job in an environment of mainly males.’ And reporting something like this can make you weak. And with that, there’s the sense of brotherhood. So if you want to take that and say you don’t want to throw your brother under the bus, we all put our pants on the same way. We’re all part of the team.”* (Female)

- “*I could say there may be other ways of telling people. Not necessarily saying that they have been sexually assaulted, but saying that this person isn’t leaving me alone, like the way you stated the question. And then that just raises a red flag in our head. And if it’s our roommate or somebody that we know, then we would go talk to them, say, ‘Just leave her alone,’ that type of thing. But it wouldn’t raise a red flag saying, ‘It’s sexual misconduct.’”* (Male)
- “*This is just home, a point where we keep talking about, is that ignorance really is bliss here. And to a certain extent, if someone starts telling you something, oftentimes a cadet will say, ‘Hold on there, don’t tell me anymore.’”* (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that not reporting minimizes the impact on someone else’s career.**
  - “*On this survey there’s nothing bad that happens if you’re, ‘I was sexually harassed,’ you might feel a little weight like you told somebody. But if I actually get sexually assaulted and then I turn that person in so now there’s all of that person’s friends that are now mad at me because I got their friend in trouble. My friends are questioning the legitimacy of it. Was it really? So you have to think, especially here, if that happens to you, that other person is probably going to get kicked out. And there’s probably something there that’s going to get you in trouble somehow too. If you’re going to make this report, someone’s leaving. And so that alone – maybe you were out at the bar and things escalated. You might have had gray areas. But do you want this guy to get kicked out that you’ve been with for four years? Maybe he’s not your best friend, but he’s here and he’s friends with someone that you’re friends with and this and that. Nobody wants anybody to leave so just don’t turn them in.”* (Female)
  - “*Nobody puts up with any form of it. So, you got your friend who maybe got drunk one night and you had to push him off of you. You don’t want them to get kicked out, ruin their entire life.”* (Male)
  - “*But also because they don’t want to be that person that gets somebody’s best friend kicked out of the Academy.”* (Male)
  - “*If you’re a male and you sexually assault a female, there’s no question you’re going to be dis-enrolled. So maybe the victim wouldn’t want that to happen to someone. They would want something to be done, but they wouldn’t want the maximum penalty.”* (Male)

- Cadets are taught to handle “lower level” issues and situations themselves.
  - “Handle things at the lowest level. That's what's instilled in us.” (Female)
  - “Well, ever since we got here, it's a big thing that our cadre told us over the summer was handle stuff at the lowest level. So that's a thing that we've been told a lot. They would always say, ‘If there's a problem, don't route it up the chain of command unless you have to.’ Just come together as a company and figure it out yourselves. And so that might lead to a lower number of reporting as well.” (Male)
  - “A term that gets thrown around here is handle things at the lowest level, goes back to the whole disciplinary system here. Things get blown out of proportion very fast. So when something like that, a sexual assault or something happens, from my perspective, I would go talk to that person first before anything else.” (Male)
  - “It depends on what exactly it is in a situation. It's a case-by-case basis. But for the most part, I think from what I've heard, the lowest level step. And if something that is offensive to you, talk to the person. If there's no resolution from there, take it up.” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “It's not necessarily in the sexual sense keep everything on the lowest level, it's Academy-wide. If you have a problem with someone, take care of it. If it persists, bring it up the chain of command. And that's what I feel is meant when we say if we don't have to make it a big issue, we're pretty much taught to keep it on the lowest level.” (Female)
- Cadets do not feel that competition at the Academy is a factor in reporting.
  - “If it has anything to do with the competitive nature, people would report all the time just to get people kicked out if you want to look at it in that sense. That's really severe sounding, but if you look at it in that light, that's how it would be because if someone does get in trouble, it goes against their military record which affects your ability or you can get kicked out. So the competitive environment has nothing to do with it.” (Female)
  - “I know at other service academies, kids won't help each other with homework because of how competitive, versus we're like, ‘Oh, I know that. Let me help you.’ So I really have a hard time believing it's the competitive nature, especially here at the Coast Guard Academy, that would cause these statistics.” (Female)
- Cadets indicated same-sex scenarios where men report are rare.
  - “I think it's probably less likely to be reported just because of the nature of being here, just the atmosphere.” (Male)

- “*I think for guys it would be less. If someone slaps them on the butt, they don't think of it. That's normal.*” (Female)
- **In a same-sex scenario, cadets indicated that talking to the offender is more helpful than reporting.**
  - “*I think it's even easier for us to talk to each other about, 'Hey, I didn't like that. Please don't do it again.' I think it's easier to resolve.*” (Female)
  - “*I think also, at least for girls, we can tell if someone doesn't want to hear jokes about sex and stuff. You're not going to make a joke in front of someone who doesn't want to make jokes. You can tell. If you know what type of person they are, you know what they want to hear. At least I would hope most people take that into consideration.*” (Female)
- **Many cadets do not report inappropriate behaviors because they are not offended.**
  - “*I feel maybe with sexual harassment you don't even realize that you're offended by it or it doesn't faze you because you tell someone to stop. Then you're taking the survey, 'Maybe that did happen.' You just don't think about it until somebody else brings it up.*” (Female)
  - “*Sometimes sexual harassment, sexual contact is a personal basis. Because I feel comfortable doesn't mean they feel comfortable. And in order to encourage a report to say, 'This is not allowed and this is allowed,' you need to be able to write it down, saying, 'All right, touching the elbow is not allowed.' And, therefore, you eventually come to there will be no contact unless it is under this circumstance. Because regardless of what I do, people could be waving at, people come over, give them a high five when they're waving, and they feel uncomfortable and report me for it. Technically they feel threatened by giving me a high five. They could technically report me. But how would I know that is not allowed? So how do you punish someone with not knowing what other people's feelings are? So you need a specific set of rules, which is very, very hard to come by. So under these circumstances, these actions are not allowed. And then sometimes people don't report because it's just me being oversensitive. It's not worth reporting. They come over and give me a hug, and they're just being friendly. So that's why most people don't want to report.*” (Male)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to make cadets aware of these statistics around sexist behaviors, sexual harassment, and language and engage them in conversations about whether they felt these behaviors are appropriate for professional leaders. Appealing to their professionalism and respect may yield a lasting sense of responsibility for discouraging behaviors and situations.

## **Cadet Recommendations**

- Continue providing mentors because this allows cadets to have more control over the reporting process.
  - “*The Academy does take measures to help us to report these things, but you personally get your own mentor and stuff. And that's why that would probably be the most beneficial route is getting a mentor and talking to them instead of going about it in your own way, instead of what the Academy tells you to do it, because you have more control over it.*” (Female)
  - “*I think even it could be by the women's leadership council, it could be by whoever, but something that maybe command can do rather than having all these trainings is, instead, focusing on individual self-reflection for people in some way, some individual program where you could have a mentor who's older than you or something so that you can think about these things. Because it's so taboo to talk about it, and I'm sure a lot of people just brush it off.*” (Female)
  - “*I think it's good that they have peer counselors now because a lot of people when they get assaulted or harassed, they don't feel like going up your chain of command because that's pretty scary. But if you have somebody you already know pretty well, it's easier to talk to them about it and sort it out.*” (Female)
- Improve the punitive policies associated with the reporting system.
  - “*Maybe making a more helpful system where there is some sort of protection against the person who brings it up. Because the person who brings it up, if they're going to get screwed over anyways, they're not going to end up bringing up that case. And then that's probably where you're going to get some more numbers going back to if the case is repeated or not, if the perpetrator's repeating the offense. And the person isn't going to bring it up if there's no safety net for that person.*” (Male)
  - “*The punitive side of it. Punishments are happening on both sides in some of the old sexual cases. I just feel like it's just happening on both sides.*” (Male)
  - “*I feel more people would be willing to go to command and say, ‘Sir, ma'am, I've been sexually assaulted,’ and they go back and say, ‘Okay, we read your case. We determined you have been sexually assaulted. What do you want to do about it?’ As opposed to, ‘You have been sexually assaulted, we'll take it from here,’ which is what they do, which is once you've been sexually assaulted, you have no say. You said, ‘Wolf, wolf, wolf,’ and the whole town is in uproar. You no longer have any control over what happens afterwards.*” (Male)

## **Perceptions of Leadership**

Another major area for investigation in the 2013 SAGR focus groups centered on perceptions of leadership with respect to being engaged in preventing USC. The presumption is

that programmatic aspects of sexual assault prevention and response are in place but require continual emphasis. Leadership at all levels is necessary to make programs maximally effective. Cadets were asked about the degree to which they interact with leadership on these issues, whether leaders react appropriately and lead by example, and what else leaders can do to help diminish USC.

### ***Interactions with Leadership on Gender-Related Topics***

- Cadets indicated leadership at the Academy reflects zero tolerance of USC.
  - “*Not in strong terms, but the general consensus has always been to intolerance.*” (Male)
  - “*I think it's shared common knowledge as an intolerable thing, so they don't really bring it up that much, but beginning of the year brief mention of it. It's a pretty shared belief.*” (Male)
  - “*Zero tolerance.*” (Female)
- Cadets indicated leadership discusses certain situations with cadets as they come up.
  - “*If something big in the Coast Guard happened, we would. But as far as just on a general basis, no, we wouldn't hear.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*It's not usually addressed because it gets addressed elsewhere. It's assumed in classrooms and everywhere else you treat people with respect and you don't make jokes and all that stuff. So they don't need to address it because it's not their job.*” (Female)
  - “*I think it's more of an indirect statement when they do mast, the punishment, they award, you see them talk about how serious that is.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*Very good expectations, what they expect from us and the way we know we do what we already know is wrong because what we've seen them do.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*I don't think it's the first thing on their mind to say, 'If you're being sexually assaulted, come and say something.' I think if it's a topic that's brought up, they'll say, 'Oh, yes, do whatever.' But it's not something that they just tell you right off the bat.*” (Female)
  - “*They don't often bring up sexual assault. Everyone says everyone can talk to me about anything. That's open communication. It's intimidating, but you can. But the tolerance level for fraternization is absolute zero. If anyone gets caught interacting unprofessionally with people they're not supposed to that there are very severe punishments, and they're pretty instantaneous. But that doesn't*

*necessarily pertain to unwanted sexual behavior. That just pertains to Academy policy.”* (Female)

- “*They don't need to express it to you directly. You just know that you're not supposed to say stuff like that.*” (Female)
- “*I think they set a good example, but we don't see them usually outside of eight in the morning to four in the afternoon.*” (Male)
- Cadets indicated that hearing what happened in a USC case is helpful.
  - “*Yeah, shows you what gets done.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*When somebody gets masted, the whole corps knows what their punishment is in 24 hours just from talking about it. I think if it was something like that, it would take less time than that to get around the corps because it's a cadet against cadet type of situation, which would be a little hotter topic. Not to belittle it, but it would. People would talk about it more. So I think that alone the way they handle it would speak to us more than just their opinion how to handle it. For us we've gotten to a point, all right, we heard the talk. We want to see the action.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*They don't do that anymore. They used to publish what happened in the mast and then send it out.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*Somebody e-mailed out an article, but it wasn't anything official.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*We found out through Fox News that it happened. It would have been nice to hear from the Superintendent that this happened instead of going on Fox one day and seeing the headline being, Five Coast Guard Academy employees kicked out for sexual whatever.*” (Mixed Gender Session)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist for the Academy to provide cadets with details about reports of sexual assault and the consequences.
- ◆ XYZ reports may be beneficial in allowing cadets to hear details about a crime and the punishments that occurred. This might help create open discussions between cadets and leadership, and disseminate knowledge of what happens to victims and offenders.

- Cadets indicated some coaches are proactive about helping cadets report.

- “*I know our coach was very, very adamant about it and gave us a sexual assault hot line number and sat us down one day at practice and, grudgingly instead of practicing, he just lectured us like a father. He was a huge figure to us. He would have been one of the first people I would have talked to because he was so adamant against this behavior. He's witnessed all of it. So he was a huge advocate for reporting and taking control of the situation.*” (Female)

- “Our coach literally said that if he ever found out we did anything unwanted to a girl, he would be the first one to get us kicked out and get the rope and hang us. We've never really had an issue on the team. I believe he would though.” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated mentors and the Women’s Leadership Council are effective.**
  - “A lot of mentors and the women’s leadership council offer up discussions, maybe not necessarily how to handle sexual assault or that sort of thing, but how to handle uncomfortable situations that maybe aren’t quite sexual assault or any of that but almost there. I’m sure that if you did have experiences or questions about sexual assault, they’re free one hundred percent to talk and they’re very open.” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated leadership would treat same-sex situations the same.**
  - “I think they’ve been pretty good about applying things fairly. So I think in that case they would as well.” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “I feel they might take it more seriously because of the close quarters we’re in. That’s the whole ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ being repealed. It was such a big deal, so if there is an issue with that, people will take it a lot more seriously because our showers are pretty open. We have communal bathrooms. We have to have a roommate. There are a lot of situations that put us in those situations. So if a situation arose, they would take it very seriously.” (Female)
  - “I don’t think they’re allowed to. I don’t think they’re allowed to treat it differently.” (Female)

### **Leading by Example**

- **Cadets indicated leadership visibly takes the issue seriously; there is no gray area.**
  - “One of the things during the training, for the first one, with CASA members, the people who are actually doing it, some of them were the people they’re high up in our chain of command. One’s at summer. She’s in charge of all of us. And so there are people who are very high up once they do it. But then also you have the list of people who are actually involved in sexual assaults who you can go to and then all that information shows us who actually participates in it and they explain to us to become a CASA member it takes multiple hours and many different trainings just to become able to do that.” (Male)
  - “I’ve seen, too, when over the summer somebody submitted an anonymous note saying something, ‘This happened to me.’ They didn’t really know who it was. They didn’t have much to go off of. But basically it was saying that there was an attempted rape, that occurred on Eagle and they were assuming it was a cadet. And then off of that, there was a CGISs investigation that branched throughout a lot of our classmates getting pulled in and talked to about it where it was.

*Nobody knew about it, but the fact that a note turned into that big of an investigation I actually thought was really good because it meant they were taking it seriously when somebody reported something, even if they didn't know who it was.”* (Mixed Gender Session)

- “Zero tolerance. They listen. They get the facts, and then they make their decision. And the decision is if they believe the person is guilty, they will get kicked out.” (Female)
- “Here I definitely think there is zero tolerance. But something I don't know if it makes other people nervous about, but I get nervous about. I don't think out in the fleet it's as zero tolerance as it would be here. I think there are people if you bring a situation to them, they might just be, ‘Oh, we'll keep it under the rug. We don't want to deal.’ You don't want that to happen, but do I think that happens sometimes? Yes.” (Female)
- **Cadets would feel uncomfortable if company officers discussed USC issues.**
  - “It would be very uncomfortable with them.” (Female)
  - “I'd rather hear it from our chief than our officer if we had to hear it from one of them.” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that, despite the best efforts of the Academy, they become desensitized to messages.**
  - “In many ways, do they model good behavior? Yes, absolutely. But in a way I think everyone acknowledges that we've become so desensitized to a lot of stuff. It's like, ‘Okay, practice right before spring break,’ coach goes, ‘Have a great time at spring break, be responsible. Don't drink if you're under age. Stay out of trouble.’ Everyone laughs at it because you hear it over and over again. They model good behaviors, sure. And do they try to tell you? Yeah. But there are only so many times you can hear it before it's just the same stuff, and it becomes a joke.” (Male)
  - “We get it from everywhere. We get it so much that I think that's actually one of the problems. We hear it so much we stop listening. Its things we've heard over and over and over. You stop listening. So I assume at one point, yes.” (Female)
- **Cadets had mixed reactions to whether staff and leadership should report USC incidents if they hear something.**
  - “If they hear it, yes. The general consensus here is if you hear something about something like this, then you do have to do something about it. And I'm pretty sure policy states that if you don't, you're just as culpable as the offender.” (Mixed Gender Session)

- “*In a lot of cases not just sexual assault, any offense, if you're present and you know about it and you don't do anything and you don't report, there's a lot of things that go on when there's certain bullet points that you hit. And if you did none of these things to stop it, then you're just as guilty, so I think that falls under it too.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- “*But I also think it would depend on what that group is, where it is, what the setting is, stuff like that. If it's on the basketball team and they're making sexist jokes against women, the coach may laugh and say it's not right, but he would still laugh and probably let it slide, as opposed to saying that up in the barracks with a company chief there and your whole company there saying the same joke would probably have different ramifications and different reaction. So I think it depends where and who is around.*” (Male)
- **Cadets had mixed reactions to viewing staff and leadership as role models.**
  - “*I think the chiefs just because as under classes third, class and fourth class, they tend to be the person you go to, not the company officer, the person directly in charge to. Although technically you're a cadet and they're a chief and you're weirdly ahead of them in some way, they're still a source of knowledge. They're also a source of comfort because a majority of them have families, and if they don't, they at least have a lot of people in the area. And they tend to be very informal when they talk to you. So it's a source of comfort.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*I think on the subject of role models too, I don't think a lot of us necessarily seek to emulate behavior. We seek to do what is right.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*Some of them. Not all of them. Dependent on the person in the position.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that some staff members do not set the best example.**
  - “*I think there are also some teachers who are really, really poor models. I know of one teacher who doesn't sexually harass people, but he makes a lot of jokes about them and harasses them. But nobody takes care of it because there's not really much you can do. They think it's just jokes until someone's feelings get hurt.*” (Female)
  - “*I think for the most part, when an incident happened last year when a faculty member made a very gender – I don't know how to describe it. That was taken care of, and they are no longer here. But the one thing I can think of that happened is taken care of.*” (Female)
  - “*I would say that the couple of people who I've seen downtown at some of the bars was not the best example. Like officers.*” (Male)

- Cadets want to feel leadership trusts them.
  - “*I wish they would trust us more. This is a personal experience. We got a talk last year about how we were going on a trip, and they said, ‘This year on the trip, even if you’re over 21, we don’t want you drinking,’ which I agree with. It’s a training. We’re going down. We’re training. We shouldn’t be drinking. And I wouldn’t drink anyway. But then they want to say if they have parties and they are hanging out with their friends, they have a couple beers because they’re responsible enough and we haven’t gotten that yet. And then why would you even say that? I think I can make my own decisions. I thought it was having the opposite effect.*” (Male)

### ***Training***

Training in sexual assault prevention and response is a recurring topic for surveys and focus groups. The facilitator started by asking cadets to describe the training they receive on these topics, how they perceive their training in reducing USC, and to give examples of the most effective training they have experienced. The section on training concluded with a discussion of recommendations for improvement.

#### ***Training Received***

- Many cadets indicated getting an abundance of sexual assault prevention and response training, which can be harmful to the message.
  - “*There’s a lot of trainings we have to do, and many are online or talking to people. And so it gets to the point where you have so many trainings on top of each other, just get it over, be done with it, get on with all your other work. Since there are so many you may see online, sexual harassment training you click through it, it’s done since there’s so many. We don’t really take it seriously.*” (Male)
  - “*One thing is when you start to have too many trainings on the same thing, then people start to get annoyed, not necessarily annoyed, but bored because if you keep sending us every morning, go listen to this same stuff, eventually it becomes repetitive and a lot of people don’t want to listen to it. Because a lot of people are busy and have a lot of stuff to get done.*” (Male)
  - “*Just if you do too much of it, people will start to not take it as seriously.*” (Male)
  - “*I don’t even remember what they’re about after a while.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*Multiple times a year, and it’s the same things over and over.*” (Female)
  - “*We heard it a million times. It’s, ‘Oh, look sexual harassment training.’ I mean come on. We heard it a million times.*” (Male)

- “When we have a million fire drills, we stop running out of the building for a fire drill because it’s just another fire drill. I think that’s how it works with these trainings. Okay, it’s just another training. It’s just another issue. We become numb to it.” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “How good of training is dependent on who is giving it. Sometimes we go to the trainings at like seven in the morning. You’re it’s another blow-off training the same we do year after year.” (Female)
- **Multiple sexual assault prevention and response trainings can have a positive effect.**
  - “As much as I hate 7 a.m. trainings, listening to the same speech over and over, I also think it’s a good thing because we’re obviously the best Academy when it comes to these statistics.” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated receiving sexual assault prevention and response training from a variety of sources.**
  - “It’s either done by some CASA member or it’s online. We have a lot of online.” (Male)
  - “We used to have a SARC. Just got a new one. She did some of the trainings.” (Male)
  - “It depends on the class. I know my political theory class we had a little talk. But going back to the point on the chiefs, not all the chiefs are clear as....” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Cadets indicated receiving multiple types of sexual assault prevention and response training.**
  - “It’s corps-wide down at Leamy Hall. That’s it really.” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “They split us in half.” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “Online trainings.” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “We generally also have one training in the middle of the semester. They usually bring in a top speaker from around the nation to come and generally starts off with jokes and then getting really serious. Then we all leave and it’s good because you hear the statistics and do the game. They show you how the AIDS spread and all this stuff. So it’s informative, but it’s kept pretty lighthearted for the most part till the very end.” (Mixed Gender Session)



- “*It's all-encompassing training. It's everything at once.*” (Male)
  - “*The Coast Guard mandated training, that's an online thing that we take. I don't remember if we take a test or a quiz at the end of it, just to make sure we're taking the training. Then we have individual trainings by the SARC will have a training.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated that having speakers who were victims of USC might be influential.**
  - “*I think going back to the training, more effective if people were willing to share personal stories. That's really hard on maybe some people, but honestly, if I heard another cadet from someone I knew personally said something happened to them – might be really sensitive and have people leave, but it would really hit hard because you see someone you know it's happened to.*” (Male)
  - “*I was just thinking a way that it could be taken more seriously is every time we hear about it, it's in a general sense. You hear, ‘Okay, general touching, general this.’ But I think, to be honest, hearing a specific person's story, this happened to me. This is a problem. That would hit people harder. And I know that's tough and maybe hard for people. But at the same time it's different than something than just saying, ‘Hey, do you guys know what sexual harassment is? Do you know what unwanted contact is?’ We've heard that a million times. But if you hear specific things, you hear this is happening right now, so it makes it more real to people.*” (Female)
  - “*I know recently I had a hard time imagining how it could escalate to this happening, because I've never been in a situation like this. But I actually talked to someone. They came out to me with their story about what happened. And a few things happened, and I was like, ‘Wow, I never even imagined that situation, and now I can understand how this happened.’ And she told me what she would have done differently now. And I really feel if we had more case studies of actual events that happened instead of, ‘What if this happened?’ How did it lead up to that? That's always my question. It makes it so much more real and so much more impactful. I think that would definitely be the best way to go about training us for it.*” (Female)
- **Cadets discussed a particularly bad training experience.**
  - “*We had one where they were talking about scenarios, but the guy that was giving it wasn't the one that was supposed to be giving it. So he was really not sensitive to what he should and should not have been saying. We knew who was supposed to be giving it, and it wasn't that guy. It was bad because he was not picking up if someone was uncomfortable or didn't want to answer a question, he didn't get it. If you notice someone doesn't want to answer a question, leave it be or give an opportunity, ‘Hey, we're going to start this training in five minutes. You can go to the bathroom and if you don't want to come back.’*” (Female)

- “*Instead of a friendly, warm environment, he made a real hostile environment. And people who had struggled with things like this before had to leave the room because he just made it really uncomfortable. He was a firstie.*” (Female)
- **Cadets discussed a particularly good training experience.**
  - “*We had a training last year where one of those speakers was someone who had gone to other Academies, and he talked about prevention and cadets and people taking care of each other. Yeah, teacher. It was a very back-and-forth thing. But he hasn't come this year that I know of, and that was the first time we had had him.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*I actually thought that one was really effective. Yeah, it was called ‘Ask First.’*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*I think it was putting a more spin on it, was more entertaining to begin with. That caught our attention. Then people took the rest of it seriously. That was a more effective way because for us it's their putting us to sleep at this point. So I thought that was really effective.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Cadets enjoyed the “Can I Kiss You” training.**
  - “*They should bring back the sexual assault guy from last year. He was really good. It was the best training we ever had.*” (Female)
  - “*It was awesome.*” (Female)
  - “*It was really good.*” (Female)
- **Cadets disliked computer-based training and found it ineffective.**
  - “*Click through a few slides, take a quiz and you get an online certificate. Click through it and you pass, so....*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Cadets indicated online training is geared toward the Service, not the Academy.**
  - “*You read through some stuff and answering some questions.*” (Male)
  - “*Government mandated one. DHS.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Cadets would not enjoy receiving training from faculty or coaches.**
  - “*I'd say no because everything here they just beat a dead horse. I'm tired of hearing about the leadership every other week, some corps lecture for an hour and a half. It's stupid at this point.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*I think it's a topic I don't talk with my friends about it because I don't talk about child hunger either. These are very heavy topics. We're not really going to bring*

*up what's happening in our sexual lives. I also don't think a coach saying to a group of individuals, 'Don't do this,' is going to be any more than – because we all know the stats. We all know when it's wrong and why it's wrong. I don't really think talking about it more is necessarily going to change the behavior that happens when it happens. I don't think you can really change a person's mental or emotional state." (Mixed Gender Session)*

- “*Just because a coach or a faculty member or a chief sits us down one on one and talks to us about it, I don't think that person would necessarily automatically make me feel comfortable if I reported. It has to do with the relationship outside that conversation that you have with that person.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Cadets thought training from mentors would be well-received, especially if male cadets are included.**
  - “*I know that may be awkward and uncomfortable. But I feel you also need to take steps into getting a mentor. If the Academy assigns you something or makes you do something, people are less likely to do it. So we as cadets here need to personally say I want a mentor and go out to seek that. So I feel if the Academy tells us to do something, people don't like to do that.*” (Female)
  - “*I think here too, women's leadership council does a good job with establishing mentorship opportunities. But for guys there really isn't, unless they actively go to a faculty member and actively seek that, there's not an avenue for them to easily access a mentor. So what I said earlier about how there needs to be a shift away from, unrestricted, restricted trainings and towards something else, giving guys that opportunity too to hear from an upstanding male officer who has been through all of this, that would be good for them too. I think right now they don't have as much of an option. They're focusing on the women and less on the men.*” (Female)
- **Cadets would prefer small group sessions for discussing USC.**
  - “*Going back to the women's leadership thing, we've had small discussions of what to do in sticky situations. We also had a panel with a couple of JOs and basically we asked them questions from anything, how to stay positive about the Coast Guard and how to not get a bad reputation. So I feel those are the most beneficial because they're around females and you're more comfortable with them, but also feel it could be helpful to maybe get a male perspective because we always get a female perspective.*” (Female)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ♦ Cadets indicated they would like a forum to openly discuss issues from both genders.
- ♦ An opportunity might exist to provide more training that is focused on small group sessions to enhance the ability of cadets to openly discuss issues from both genders.

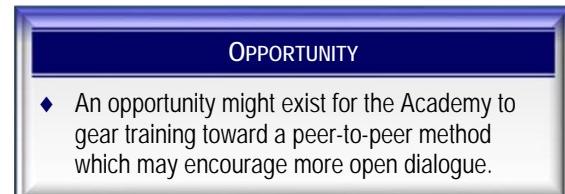
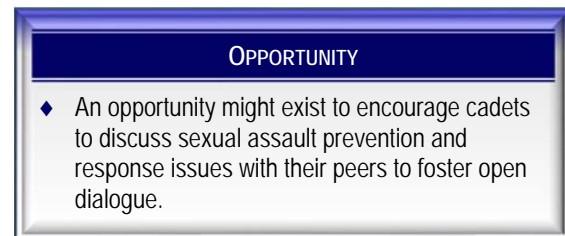
- “I think sometimes we’re jaded to some of the training because they’re either at seven in the morning or they’re mandated online or you just don’t want to do it. I think small sessions like this talking about experiences, not necessarily your personal experience, but culture at the Academy is a lot more effective than actually going to a training.” (Male)
- “Biggest thing I think to deter future sexual harassment at the Academy because our environment is so specific to the institution and the military, we have to have these discussions, these open discussions without being judged or having the threat of getting in trouble, so break away from the command climate. So it’s good you guys are from the outside, we’re talking to you it’s more open with you about what happened here.” (Male)

- Cadets indicated open discussions with peers would be beneficial.

- “I would say, too, no matter how many times you say something to a person, if they are that person, it’s really hard to say, ‘Hey, don’t do this,’ and then expect them not to do it. Human nature is you form habits and you continue them until something big happens to where you can’t do that anymore, which is why I think it’s good that they focus more on reporting. Because if you focus on trying to change the person, that’s going to be wasting time. Whereas, if someone’s reporting and that person pays for what they did, then some of the change might happen in them. But just telling somebody that it’s wrong, they’re not necessarily going to be, ‘Oh, well, now I don’t want to sexually assault people.’” (Mixed Gender Session)
- “I think the biggest influence that can really happen if a friend’s at training, they’re, ‘Man, that happened last weekend.’ We need to be more careful and not let this happen. So it’s more accountability where not that we need to talk about it more, but just encouraged to be accountable for and protect each other if we’re going out on a weekend or something.” (Mixed Gender Session)

- Cadets prefer training by CASA members because they are fellow cadets.

- “I think I listened a little bit more if it’s a cadet or someone doing the training as opposed to an online training. Online I just want to click through it, get through the rest of my day, some homework. If it’s a cadet presenting the materials, it’s closer to home. It’s present. It’s here.” (Male)



- “*The cadets are engaging in the trainings. You don't necessarily witness it. Everybody understands it.*” (Male)
    - “*Probably a cadet and took it seriously. Because having seniors give it to us, people who are passionate about it, really helps. It gives us a role model as opposed to an officer who's detached from our situations.*” (Female)
    - “*That's most effective too. Coming from us, coming from a cadet. Because the topic's so sensitive, that if someone's talking about it, you're going to respect it and really listen to them.*” (Male)
    - “*I guess the case studies, cases that they provide for the CASA training just gave a little more context to some of the stuff we talked about, especially some of those you might not consider, the whole massaging one.*” (Female)
    - “*I think the CASA training over the Swab Summer was pretty good.*” (Female)
    - “*They broke us up in males and females apart. I think that was beneficial. And the people who gave the training from CASA, I thought it was helpful. It was the people who yelled at us all summer, then gave us their cell phone numbers. 'If you need a ride, call us. Don't worry about it. We can talk about it a different time.'*” (Female)
  - **Cadets do not feel that memos and letters from leadership are useful in distributing information about reporting, the SARC, and other potentially useful numbers.**
    - “*I think we had an e-mail about it a while back, one of them long e-mails. We get a bunch of memos. They post it in the bathroom.*” (Female)
    - “*It's in the bathroom. It's the language of it. You just don't feel like reading that or trying to decipher it.*” (Female)
  - **Cadets indicated sexist behavior training would be difficult to implement.**
    - “*There's a pretty visible line. So we know when we're pushing things and when we're not. I think to take on something as monumental as tackling, quote, unquote, sexist behaviors, because people have sexist tendencies, I mean that's very, very tough.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- OPPORTUNITY**

  - ◆ An opportunity might exist for the Academy to diversify how information about sexual assault prevention and response is circulated, (e.g., company commanders, CASA).
- OPPORTUNITY**

  - ◆ An opportunity might exist to train cadets that as future leaders they are responsible for creating an environment that does not tolerate harassment or belittling people based on gender.

- “*I think to get rid of that, you almost have to completely shut any differences between the sexes, and there are differences in the sexes.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Training typically takes place in the morning.** Cadets indicated there was no convenient time for sexual assault prevention and response training to occur.
  - “*Normally in the mornings at seven.*” (Male)
  - “*Not our best time of day.*” (Male)
  - “*Right after breakfast so you want to go to sleep.*” (Male)
  - “*There is no convenient time. You're tired all day. It doesn't matter.*” (Male)
- **Cadets suggested that lunchtime sexual assault prevention and response training with food might be an option for small groups.**
  - “*If you do a lunch excusal, that's the only thing I can think cadets would respond well to, give us better food than ward room food, sit us down in a room like this, a small group like this, at lunch instead of at a time where we think we could be more productive. I think there would be a lot better responses.*” (Female)
  - “*I was going to say every time of the day except for lunch pretty much it could be considered an inconvenience, so it's very hard to find a time everyone would agree on.*” (Female)
- **Cadets indicated that, aside from sexual assault prevention and response training, USC issues are not at the forefront.**
  - “*About the trainings, that's right, but I mean besides the trainings, it's not really present anywhere. So you see a couple trainings a year, but it's not really in the front of my mind often at all so....*” (Male)
- **Cadets do not believe that sexual assault prevention and response training would stop people who really want to commit the crime.**
  - “*I would also say if I were planning on committing a sexual act, we have Coast Guard mandate training. I'm sure you know we have sexual assault training and all that. That wouldn't deter me at all from committing that act if I really wanted to. I mean personally, I just speak for myself, I don't take that training very seriously. We all know we're not supposed to commit sexual assault, sexual harassment, stuff like that. From my perspective, I just don't see a point in having mandated training like that.*” (Male)

- Cadets do not believe that sexual assault prevention and response training would change one's basic character and viewpoints.
  - “*They can only train us so much, and I really feel like we have the tools. It's just going to come down to your character when that situation arises, the end result.*” (Male)
  - “*I think the atmosphere is pretty clear what can be tolerated and what isn't tolerated here. And I don't know how much more effective any more trainings would be. I think largely the problem is the culture, and it's people coming in here and how they've been raised and their respect towards other people, and that just coming here getting some trainings, they're not going to change.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- Cadets indicated that the Academy tends to extend the zero tolerance policy to all relationships, causing conflicting situations.
  - “*It's conflicting interests at the Academy because it's almost don't have sex, don't have sex. There's this terrible stigma associated with sex at the Academy and in the military. But then it's you come to the other side, it's like, all this sexual assault is happening anyway despite the fact the rule is don't have sex. And I think that those two concepts are at odds with each other because sex is viewed so negatively in the military in general and at the Academies that I don't know how you would bridge that gap. But I think that has a lot to do with it, the fact it's got this negative stigma.*” (Female)
  - “*I would say one thing about how command and the Academy itself handles anything that has to do anything with romantic things or relationships, you can literally get masted for a kiss on the cheek here. They need to realize that sex happens and that when you see somebody getting caught and they literally get a kiss on the cheek and you can get a Class I and taking stuff that's so little and blowing it to the extreme and not even taking a little bit of common sense.*” (Female)
- Cadets know very little about their SARC and other resources because of several transitions.
  - “*Honestly, I don't even know where their office is. I think one time when I was a fourth class we had a training with the person who was a SARC then for ten minutes, and that was it. And I have no idea where their office is. I have no idea who it is. And I think it's the same for a lot of cadets, they just don't know who it is.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*I think it's strange because I'm a CASA member actually, and I didn't know that the old SARC left. And I didn't know about the interim SARC until I went to the training for the gender relations survey. Oh, I guess he left. I didn't know about anyone. So I think that's strange.*” (Mixed Gender Session)

- “*I don't know the new one.*” (Female)
- “[*Flyers are*] in the bathroom. OT desk, varsity organization's office.” (Female)
- “*Bulletin board outside his office or her office.*” (Female)
- **Cadets do not think civility training would be welcomed.**
  - “*I think a lot of people wouldn't like that. First of all, I think a lot of people's definitions on that are completely different. I know mine are conservative by most people's standards. But also, just telling someone how to act, we've had some trainings of, ‘Hon, this is the proper way to dress.’ This is how you look good. It just doesn't work. I don't know if it's different, but in my opinion it wouldn't work.*” (Female)
  - “*The whole civility training stuff I personally think about it. I think there's only two ways that the corps or just the corps in general could act or react to those. They could either get really, really angry about it and then the other issue would be they would actually make fun of it. They would for three days straight all the doors would be held open for all the girls and then no one remember it, or it could take it to heart. They're either going to make fun of it and be mad about it, or it could actually work. So there's no actual way to tell.*” (Female)

## **Cadet Recommendations**

- **Provide training that is relevant to cadets' roles as future leaders.**
  - “*I think we have a lot of sexual harassment training and don't really witness much of it in our daily lives or I don't think any of us have probably ever witnessed it or anybody in the Corps has witnessed it. Maybe a few. So I think we see a lot of trainings that don't really have much impact because it's just, I know what this is. I know how to do it. I know how to report it, that type of thing. So whenever I see something like sexual harassment training, it's just like not again.*” (Male)
  - “*I haven't done any of the online ones yet, but they're all scenarios with cadets, not so much scenarios with real Coast Guard per se. So I think if they could give us more how it works in the fleet, if something happened and this did happen and this is what you should do, as opposed to this happened in Chase Hall.*” (Male)
  - “*How we're supposed to respond, not just who we talk to so they can respond.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*On our fleet we were trained on how to train other people for the summer of our junior year. They had stations with the firsties at each one. We had to deal with different situation, and one of them was, ‘What happens if one of your swabs has an episode or something happens?’ ‘How will you react to that?’ You're not going to be completely ready till it actually happens and feel prepared, but they*

*do give us instances, situations. Because at that point you're in charge of someone else. And this is something that happened when we were cadre, it happened when we were swabs, and it's, unfortunately, common.”* (Mixed Gender Session)

- **Provide more preventative training.**

- “*I think as far as the Academy getting better at dealing with these sort of things, yeah, we talk about how we always get all these sexual assault trainings. It's all focusing on what you do after you've been sexually assaulted. So none of the trainings really address why that would even happen, the culture behind it. I think that would be a better way to go about doing those trainings as opposed to, ‘Well, if this happens, there's restricted and unrestricted.’ We know that.*” (Female)
- “*And to monitor it, you would need to decrease the gray area to deter people from doing it – make the line thinner so as soon as you step over the line, you're done.*” (Male)
- “*You can't shrink it. That's why you have to draw a line. Whereas, you're always in the gray area, you can't decrease. You're always wondering the gray area. We're not really looking at the part complete rape. You know that's obviously over the line. You're looking at the part where you don't know if it's worse to kick someone out or maybe deal with it yourself. So that's that part that we're looking at. Currently there's no way we can regulate that.*” (Male)

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to provide prevention training not only to teach female cadets how to be vocal about their boundaries, but also to include information about what types of behavior are unacceptable at the Academy.
- ◆ Another opportunity might exist to champion cadets who challenge bad behaviors.

- **Ensure sexual assault prevention and response training teaches cadets to clearly create boundaries.**

- “*So I think the training should be more focused on, ‘This is how you let people know you're being offended.’*” (Male)
- “*I just think during these trainings it should be more noted it's always best to let the person know and try to handle it the democratic way and let them know because I don't think a lot of people do that that are recorded as assault. Establishing boundaries right away.*” (Male)

- **Do not use XYZ cases, since cadets can be easily identified.**

- “*We know there was a Mohegan Sun thing. We might know who's involved. By doing that, it just tells you all the little details.*” (Female)
- “*We had the XYZ thing this summer. We read packets on different scenarios. As soon as the school year started, I found out who were the people in some of those*”

*cases. I was like, ‘Oh, that happened last year? Oh, this is the person that did that? Oh, I know this person.’ The honor boards and mast, a lot of them are open to who wants to come. But on the other hand, it’s not something people want to talk about necessarily.”* (Female)

- *“I think having something like that happen to you is horrific for anybody no matter what it is. The fact everything at the Academy is public information automatically makes it very difficult, harder than it is at a civilian college or any civilian workplace. But then to make it something that you teach your swabs every Swab Summer, ‘Oh, look at this. Look at this case.’ That person who went through that horrible experience, that victim now not only do all their classmates know about it, do all the people that were at the Academy that year know about it, but just like this vicious cycle that it just keeps going. It would make the situation worse for the victim.”* (Female)
- *“Everybody's going to know who that person is no matter what.”* (Female)

### ***Additional Cadet Recommendations***

The final major area of discussion in the 2013 SAGR focus groups was titled “Additional recommendations for addressing USC and sexual harassment.” The purpose was to spend a few minutes reflecting on the general discussion of factors influencing USC at the Academy and to drive out any other good ideas from the cadets on ways to reduce it. To start the conversation, cadets were asked about how they would feel if counseling were provided to incoming cadets with a prior USC experience. Cadets were then asked how well prepared they felt for dealing with gender-related issues when they have subordinates. The facilitator ended the focus groups by asking if a Dignity and Respect Code, similar to the Honor Code, might be helpful in creating a culture of zero tolerance. The facilitator ended the focus groups by asking cadets for their final thoughts on issues and if there were any questions that were not asked but should have been.

### ***Counseling for Unwanted Sexual Contact Prior to Coming to the Academy***

- **Cadets agreed that counseling incoming cadets who experienced USC is a good idea.**
  - *“I think so. Just the common knowledge that you can go for something in the past. Because maybe something that they're doing, their lifestyle is increasing their chance.”* (Male)
  - *“They have to be once they were accepted and began coming to the Academy. Make it an optional thing. If you sign this, you don't have to go through any of the offered mediation, not mediation, but counseling.”* (Male)
  - *“You still need coping mechanisms. I think the chaplains and counselors make themselves available if anyone needs to talk to them. They spent enough time talking to the swabs and us. If they need to see us, ask, and they'll get us to them over the summer.”* (Female)

- Cadets agreed that teaching incoming cadets how to deal with traumatic experiences would be helpful.
  - “*There's plenty of ways the student could go once they were here. But out in the civilian world, once they've come in, they've already handled it.*” (Female)
  - “*Even if you don't, once you get here, you're in a completely different world, so you probably don't think about it anymore.*” (Female)
  - “*Every single sexual assault training just brings up bad memories again. It's already happened, but it's a whole new start here. So there's no reason to go get help or anything like that because you have a brand new start to go with.*” (Female)
- Cadets indicated counselors are good resources.
  - “*They have a variety of different counselors. There are faculty who are civilians. There are also peer counselors. You can go to people in your commands.*” (Female)
  - “*And we have psychologists, therapists I think down in the clinic in the basement.*” (Female)
  - “*Support can be off base if you don't want to go here.*” (Female)
  - “*There are so many options presented to us that even if you had a prior experience, you would definitely be able to get help if you reached out for it even just a little bit.*” (Female)

#### OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ An opportunity might exist to educate cadets that an experience of USC is not easily forgettable, and might impact a cadet's ability to succeed if left untreated.

### ***Preparation for the Future***

- Cadets felt prepared to handle situations where subordinates come to them for help.
  - “*First ask how, where, the info. Then I would probably ask them what they wanted to do with it. If they said, 'Look, I feel uncomfortable,' if they really wanted me to do that, I would. But I think that's a general thing. I think everyone would want to know the details first surrounding it before they got involved.*” (Male)
  - “*It would depend on what they claimed, but yeah.*” (Male)
  - “*If someone came and told me they were forcibly raped, I wouldn't hesitate at all.*” (Male)

- “*I think the easiest thing to do is for a newly minted ensign, just pass it up the chain. So if somebody comes to you saying this happened, you don't know what to do, you talk to your boss. Say I was told this at this point. If they tell you, it's not restricted. If you tell them, they have more experience because they've been on the fleet longer. So just tell somebody else.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- “*I think the Academy has given us the tools to recognize the big overarching things. But as far as lesser things that happen, I feel like we wouldn't be able to recognize it just because of how desensitized we have become because of all the trainings and all that stuff and just the climate and the culture we are in that we live in every day. We probably wouldn't be able to recognize some of those lesser offenses. But as far as the big offenses like a rape case, obviously we're prepared for that. We would know how to handle that, what to do.*” (Male)
- **Cadets understand their responsibility as leaders, but they do not have much authority as cadets.**
  - “*The training is all on a leader. They don't have a student version. You're not restricted, unrestricted. It's everyone's responsibility.*” (Male)
  - “*Leader at all levels, freshman through senior in some capacity, so doesn't change.*” (Male)
  - “*If I do things the way that they do, yes. If I have zero tolerance and somebody comes to me and I kick them out, probably. But if they want me to be more flexible, more personal, and take different situations into account, then I would say no because they never tell us how to deal with the specific information. They take all the matters into their own hands. And sometimes we cadets, we see a lot more things than they do. But they won't listen to us because we're just cadets. So they're not really preparing us how to use the power we're going to have once we graduate.*” (Male)

### **Dignity and Respect Code**

- **Cadets did not favor the idea of implementing a Dignity and Respect Code.**
  - “*There's enough regulations, formal avenues and actual written down like punishments and regs that state.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
  - “*I think that would probably make it worse. It would make that whole concept into a joke.*” (Female)
  - “*You get in trouble for everything here. You don't need anything else to get in trouble for. There's already a list of regs. Failure to use good judgment could cover anything they want. If they hear you say something, you can get failure to use good judgment and get in trouble for that. They have a rule for everything already, just determines how they term it under.*” (Female)

- **Cadets noted they already have to follow a code of respect.**
  - “*There is something. The Coast Guard has a code of respect, and if someone breaches that sort of code of respect they get punished. It's common knowledge sort of thing.*” (Male)
  - “*The other one is respect, so I think that one falls under that. If you respect somebody, you're not going to do something to make them uncomfortable or offend them. I think adding another code it wouldn't necessarily do much because we've got codes. We've got a standard as a general knowledge that at a military academy there is a higher standard to be held, and we know that coming in. So I think that they have their bases covered as far as a code. But it's more the atmosphere that's set up here that is more affecting it than what they've written on a piece of paper for us.*” (Mixed Gender Session)
- **Some cadets believed a Dignity and Respect Code would not be effective.**
  - “*We have an honor code. People still cheat on their assignments. If you sign this code and you're drinking downtown, we're not going to remember, ‘Oh, I signed this code.’*” (Male)
  - “*I think that would desensitize the issue, another box you check and get graded.*” (Male)
- **Cadets indicated they feel safe at the Academy.**
  - “*We're all pretty proud of our Service. Coming in, a lot were like, "You're going to have to deal with a lot." But it's not nearly as bad as some may think.*” (Female)
  - “*I feel safer here than most of my friends back in their civilian colleges.*” (Female)
  - “*I also feel safer here than at the other Academies. Navy or whoever will talk to me about the conditions in their barracks, and I'll say, ‘That doesn't happen here.’*” (Female)

## **Chapter 9: U.S. Coast Guard Academy Faculty and Staff**

Three focus group sessions were conducted at USCGA on March 4-6, 2013. Each session was scheduled for a 90-minute period. The three sessions were: faculty members, coaches and athletic staff, and military staff. Each session had between six and thirteen participants.

### ***Sexual Assault***

The 2013 SAGR focus groups were the first time sessions were held with anyone other than cadets. Because faculty and staff interact with cadets daily, the rationale was to present to them many of the same questions posed to the cadet participants to gain a different perspective on issues. The same approach was taken where in each topical area the facilitator made an effort to drive out causes for behaviors or situations being discussed and recommendations for improvement.

The discussions began by sharing with the participants the unwanted sexual contact (USC) rates for the DoD academies<sup>5</sup> and the United States Coast Guard Academy (USCGA) from the 2012 SAGR. Participants were asked whether they were aware of the rates presented and to whether they felt the rates seemed accurate. Additional questions were posed for participants' knowledge of where incidents were most likely to occur, their thoughts on victims experiencing multiple incidents of USC over time, and the role of "sexting" and pornography. Participants further contributed comments on the role alcohol plays in USC and when during the day it is more likely to occur.

### ***Familiarity of Incidence Rates from 2012 SAGR***

- **Faculty and staff voiced their initial reaction to USC incidence rates.**
  - *"I find them disgusting. A year is a long time period. And for something like that to happen once a year is unacceptable. But what disturbs me, 10 percent of cadets having experienced this male or female I think is ridiculous. There's no room for that type of behavior in the Coast Guard Academy, period. And the fact that it's basically doubled in four years angers me more."* (Faculty)
  - *"I would think these rates with the Coast Guard, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 going up, I would think that would measure up very well because probably for about the first five years or six years that we worked here or that I worked here, I don't think we ever had any educational sessions at any level on any sexual assaults. There was no training. There was no nothing. I believe, in the last six years, certainly the Academy is on a rise of trainings, and since our colleague committed suicide, because there was never even a suicide prevention type training before that, so that really was the sort of the demarcation, the line in the sand for now we start trainings afterwards. I think that the Coast Guard female cadets are now more empowered to report, and I think that it's more clearly understood how to report*

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<sup>5</sup> United States Naval Academy, United States Military Academy, and United States Air Force Academy

*and what the restrictions are. I just think now I wouldn't be surprised personally if the number moved up again.”* (Athletic)

- “*It's a set of females that have now transitioned out of the Academy to the fleet. So as that occurs, I believe you're going to begin to get more accurate reporting because now the culture is laid in to how to do it.*” (Athletic)
- **Some faculty and staff felt the incidence rates were high, some felt the rates were low.**
  - “*I'm surprised – while I agree with you it's abhorrent that it happens, I'm surprised the numbers are this low.*” (Faculty)
  - “*It's under-reported.*” (Faculty)
  - “*From my interaction with cadets, I'm sure other faculty and probably female faculty have this, but cadets walking in and relating an experience and having to counsel them. I'm surprised the numbers are this low.*” (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff discussed the increase in incidence rates.**
  - “*So I look through this chart and I say, is it actually increasing or is it just that people are more willing to share that information in a non-attributable survey?*” (Faculty)
  - “*I think the number is probably significantly lower than at civilian schools, but it's not low enough.*” (Faculty)
  - “*The Chronicle of Higher Education* in the fall, the lead article was about this. At the Coast Guard we're about equal to what they imagined was the rate. So our reported rate was about what they were saying was the average at colleges and universities across the country. West Point, Air Force, and Annapolis fared less well. Their rates were higher. So we're in line with the country.” (Faculty)
  - “*We're not every school.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I guess the concern just looking at that, it's gone up.*” (Military)
  - “*I've been here for a while, and I think back in those mid-two thousand years. There was a bigger focus on sexual assault prevention here at the Academy, and I think it's faded over the years.*” (Military)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ An opportunity might exist for the Academy to educate faculty and personnel on ways to help promote intolerance of unwanted behaviors.</li><li>◆ An opportunity might exist for the Academy to develop a strategy to engage faculty and staff in a focused effort to deal with inappropriate behaviors among cadets and foster a culture of professionalism and respect.</li></ul>

- “*The girls understand the situation, understand the mechanism of reporting, are more comfortable. I think the Academy has begun to build in better layers for helping them. I think there's a mentoring program. There are things out there now that these things can come through in a cleaner cycle.*” (Athletic)
- “*We were here when the biggest courts-martial in the history of this Academy occurred, a serial rapist so called, went all the way to the Supreme Court. So whatever programs were put into place at that time, of which everyone went through, all the cadets went through, seemed to have no positive affect because the trend is upward for sexual contact. And it stayed in the courts. So all of the programs were in these various rooms. So obviously anything that was put into place to correct that or to curtail even the least sexual contact had no positive effect.*” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated incidence rates may also be a result of the “hook-up” culture.**
  - “*Right about when this came out, there was an article in the New York Times that my first season I discussed. It was the hookup culture. And we talked – the article was about how kids these days don't really go on old-fashioned dates anymore. They just go out in groups and then hook up. I think that that all played into this, into this data.*” (Military)

### **Location of Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- **Faculty and staff indicated the barracks are the most likely place for USC to occur at the Academy.**
  - “*Chase Hall.*” (all Military)
  - “*The weekends. People are drinking. Alcohol is involved.*” (Military)
  - “*I think it has a lot to do with they don't live anywhere else. So they go downtown. Alcohol is involved or whatever, and then they come back to their home. And they all live in the same place. It actually does happen here versus somewhere else.*” (Military)
  - “*My guess would be Chase, what they called creeping. I haven't heard it in nine years or so, but it's when people would come back loaded from whatever they were doing and somebody saw somebody else at the bar but they didn't fool around at the bar. They come back and either they come out of brushing their teeth and somebody's waiting for them. And I've had athletes that happened to them.*” (Athletic)



- Faculty and staff indicated a preventive action would be to lock the doors to cadet rooms.
  - “*They're not allowed to lock their doors. So being allowed to, then no one could check on it as much. But being allowed to would prevent also somebody from sleeping.*” (Military)
- Faculty and staff indicated cadets might be vulnerable on ships during summer training and team trips.
  - “*I think on a ship in the summer training, if they're not saying it.*” (Military)
  - “*During the summer on training missions in summer, that's a place where it could happen too.*” (Military)
  - “*It's not always cadet on cadet. Sometimes it's cutter crew to cadet. You get a 25-year-old enlisted guy and 19-year-old rising sophomore.*” (Athletic)
  - “*This problem is the motel if you're staying overnight.*” (Athletic)
- Faculty and staff indicated increasing awareness about USC at the Academy will help make cadets safer.
  - “*We just came up with a whole plan of increasing awareness here. We're going to do a stand-down in a couple weeks where all the faculty are supposed to attend. We hired a new sexual assault coordinator. They are going to do sessions with all the faculty and staff for an hour throughout the day – I think a lot of staff members thinks that it's different because it's cadets. It's not the same rules. If a cadet comes to you about something, keep it confidential. Make them more aware of the process. The regimental staff establish a position on the regimental staff, a regimental climate officer. Then that person's going to have a junior to work with them, Cadets Against Sexual Assault. So that will be a whole staff that address this concern rightly. And the Superintendent was briefed on it yesterday, and she bought off on the ideas.*” (Military)

### ***Multiple Incidents of Unwanted Sexual Contact***

- Faculty and staff opinions differed on whether multiple incidents involved the same offender or different offenders.
  - “*I think the perpetrator might find someone who they approach or do something, and then they know that person doesn't report it and then they know they can go back again.*” (Military)
  - “*It would be both the same person, then if that person tells their friends.*” (Military)

- “When I first heard the data, my sense was that these were cases that started off consensual and went further than one person wanted to and not so much somebody entering the room of somebody else and it being a little more random.” (Military)
- “I think it's people who know each other – went downtown, started – there wouldn't be too much attention, brought to a situation necessarily where cadets come back and all go to a room because that's fairly normal. But, if you leave and three hours later something bad happened, I think that's probably the most likely route as well. Just because if anything else, I think the person would probably draw attention to themselves if they were to actually from the get-go forcefully.” (Military)
- “I think some of the things that I hear from is that sometimes female cadets, young women, get themselves into a situation and they feel like they can't say no or they got too far and they can't say no. And it's also dealing with someone that they know, someone they may consider to be a friend – I've heard this a lot. I didn't want to hurt the person's feelings. So they wind up doing something they didn't want to do. But, again, it was a friend and didn't want to hurt his feelings or his career.” (Military)

### **Victim Blaming**

- **Faculty and staff indicated victim blaming occurs at the Academy.**
  - “I think it is common.” (Military)
  - “He doesn't look like the creepy stereotype that you have, largely a group of very high performers who do really well. So that's where that might contribute to that is because that person couldn't possibly do that.” (Military)
  - “That goes back to the repeat offender, that person doesn't think they're going to get in trouble. They're perceived so highly, that person is not going to make a report of it.” (Military)
- **Faculty and staff indicated education is the best solution to change the perception that a sexual assault is the victim's fault.**
  - “Try to educate the individual. I think a lot of times when you're talking about some kind of sexual assault, that's not your Hollywood stereotype of a stranger. When it's maybe one or two individuals who are dating or who are involved, that's where you have the issue that people need to understand that, ‘No means no,’ and just because maybe they're in a relationship, that that's where you run into that. And I think it's just education, that's it's not the victim's fault. And I think sometimes the challenges are when a person puts themselves in a vulnerable position, that's where the victim blaming tends to occur, especially if there's

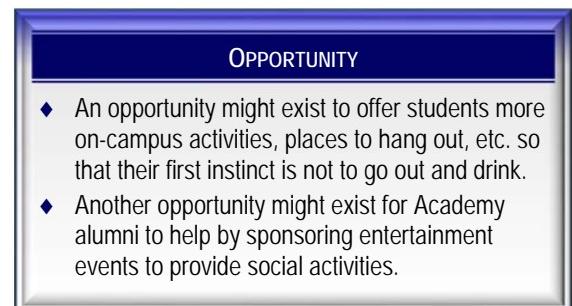
*alcohol involved and maybe they don't adhere to every safety procedure or thing, that's where that tends to come in.”* (Military)

- “*Education. That's foremost. But this idea of education and allowing persons to feel safe, to voice what their concerns may or may not be. Letting them know what the resources are, but sometimes we have to take them to the resources because individuals may not do that on their own. They may just say, ‘It will be all right.’ So educating and people hear that. But how do you educate and get the person to take action on the education they received? That's a challenge. Some people you have to take them to the resource. Some people will go on their own. Some will not do nothing. I'm sure others can say. There are other things they will do, so getting them to the resource.”* (Military)
  - “*I think another challenge that comes up too is, at least here, is reputation. You talk about two cadets are a competing organization constantly so. Right, wrong, otherwise, I think cadets sometimes at the top of their class can be perceived as doing no wrong and in their peer's views versus you have a victim that, say, unfortunately, is not in top whatever. I think that can come into play as far as public opinion and, ‘Well, it must be her fault because there's no way that he would do that, he or she would do that. They're top ten performers.’”* (Military)
- **Faculty and staff do not think false reporting is common at the Academy.**
    - “*I heard of it when I was here when I first got here. The cadets who are now here, they're not aware of it. It's gone away. But it was one of those situations where we locked down the room. We posted a guard so nobody could get in there and get in there with evidence. So automatically that assumption, that rumor mill is spreading. Something's going on. Something bad is going on. Why is this guy's room locked? You flip it over the other side of the coin, they were together consuming alcohol. Her boyfriend found out. She was like, ‘Oh, my gosh.’ I think that has all kind of gone away with that class.”* (Military)
    - “*I've heard of it. I don't know if it's real. You hear about it.”* (Military)
    - “*One case happens, and then people make assumptions years down the road.”* (Military)
    - “*I heard it on the fleet, not here.”* (Military)

### **Use of Alcohol**

- **Faculty and staff had mixed reactions to the idea of removing alcohol from campus to relieve USC.**
  - “*There's your solution there. No alcohol use at the Academy. If you do, you get kicked out, whether 21 or not. If you want to get rid of it, that's what you do.”* (Athletic)

- “Do you ban alcohol from the Academy and leave that loaded gun to the cutter where the ramifications are greater when potentially they have access to the car and ten times more salary. I think the place is somewhat oppressive.” (Athletic)
  - “For any student population 18 to – you can go up to 24-year-old males – males slower developmental process than women, incidents of alcohol and sexual assault are going to be tied very much together. This place, repressed sexual activity and repressed alcohol activity.” (Athletic)
  - “You can generally have alcohol if you are of age at a military installation if you're not on duty. You go over to the sub base and there are 21-year-old enlisted guys having a beer and bowling. But our students are not allowed to have that experience. They are not allowed to have a beer even if they are 21 and they are on base. Monday night football is the only time I know of when they're allowed to have any alcohol, and that's only firsties. So second class who are 21, no beer.” (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff indicated binge drinking is related to the restrictions placed on cadets and their time constraints.**
  - “I think these kids are pent up from being adults by and large. So there are 24 hours when they can leave campus and by and large binge drink.” (Athletic)
  - “This place is born for binge drinking.” (Athletic)
  - “If they are going to binge drink at a civilian school, you know who you're safe with. Here you assume you're safe with everybody.” (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff indicated alcohol is a problem because of the amount available on the weekends and the limited choices of social activities.**
  - “They can certainly provide more social outlets without a doubt. You'd like to think there could be a band might come in here and play once and a while. Socially the place is a wasteland.” (Athletic)
  - “It's a very unrealistic set of expectations for 18-year-olds to make those decisions. We have such limited chances. So they get to act like normal college kids when they go on a road trip with our teams and we actually get away and the girls get to go to their hotel room and throw on the clothes they want to wear and go out to dinner. The whole place you're channeling a lot in to these four years and punting a lot from a life experience standpoint – and only the most savvy kids can



*compartmentalize their fun. There are very few kids that are pros at it here, so you're going to get a lot of mistakes.”* (Athletic)

- “*We're not dealing with a very street smart kid. We're not. We're dealing with more of a helicopter parent offspring kid because that's how they got this big-time resume to get in here. So you're not dealing with a street savvy dude.*” (Athletic)
- “*Our kids tend to trip and make mistakes when they do have a chance to have free time.*” (Athletic)
- “*If you look at the old culture of the military, isn't it play hard, drink, cigarettes and beer and alcohol and all the old movies.*” (Athletic)
- “*It seems like alcohol is also part of this culture as much as you want to get it out of this culture.*” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated underage drinking and fear of repercussions factor into reporting a situation.**
  - “*I wonder how much non-reporting is maybe the person that found themselves in a bad situation where doing something they shouldn't have been doing to begin with unrelated to the sexual assault. So maybe that plays into it, underage drinking or some things. If I go forward and this comes forward and the impact on me.*” (Military)

### **Sexting, Pornography, Flirting, and Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- **Faculty and staff indicated sexting is a social issue.**
  - “*That's replaced locker room talk.*” (Athletic)

### **Sexual Harassment and Sexist Behavior**

Similar to the cadet focus groups, this set of questions posed a hypothesis about the relationship of verbally offensive behaviors, such as sexual harassment and sexist comments, on USC. The facilitator began by sharing results from the 2012 SAGR on rates of sexual harassment and sexist behavior at other academies over the past four surveys and hearing participants' reactions. The facilitator then gave additional findings based on 2012 SAGR that those men and women who experienced USC in the past year also tended to experience sexual harassment and sexist behavior at higher rates. Participants commented on the possible relationships among these unwanted gender-related behaviors and what the impact might be of addressing the verbal behaviors and possibly reducing USC. Following up, the facilitator asked if cultural factors, such as attitudes of disrespect toward women, contributed to USC. This section ended with a discussion of recommendations for decreasing sexual harassment and sexist behavior.

## **Familiarity with Incidence Rates from 2012 SAGR**

- **Faculty and staff indicated sexual harassment and sexist behavior are pervasive in society.**
  - *"I don't know how you can turn a TV on and not be confronted with crude and offensive behavior. I think that's the world we live in. That's the bar. And if you look at how they define sexual harassment, I'm surprised not 100 percent. I don't think you can go through a year and not experience one of these forms of sexual harassment."* (Faculty)
  - *"I couldn't imagine if it's happening enough 40, 50 percent are exposed to it, then everybody probably is."* (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff had mixed reactions to the sexist behavior rates.**
  - *"I'm surprised it's that low."* (Military)
  - *"Personally I think that's low. I think that's quite low on both sides."* (Faculty)
  - *"Just from what I overhear in the classroom, behaviors I see exhibited towards people, I think it's low."* (Faculty)
  - *"I mean constantly there's the teasing people about, 'That's so gay,' and making a man, feminizing, if that's a word. I teach a rigorous technical class, as do most of us here."* (Faculty)
  - *"That surprises me because I think the women getting here are pretty well respected by the male cadets. That does surprise me."* (Military)
  - *"Whatever the number is, a third, I think it has a lot to do with that we have a third females here. And they're just part of the day. They're part of the fabric. I know that the other Academies are much lower than that, so maybe more of an anomaly than the women here. But that does surprise me because I don't hear that much from certainly the men, that they see the women as being different or less."* (Military)
  - *"The numbers don't surprise me. I know a couple years ago when I first got here, one of the conversations I found myself frequently having with groups of cadets was using what I would consider sexist terms but out of context. They would use words like, 'You're so gay, Quit being a bitch,' but they weren't using it per the dictionary term, if you will. And some of them had no idea they were violating the code. They were like, 'Oh, I grew up hearing it.' I know several of us had those conversations with our cadets. I think it's got a lot better actually. I remember a couple years ago it was pretty common to hear those phrases you overhear them talking to each other like that. They weren't offending each other. It was because somebody else was in the room."* (Military)

- **Faculty and staff indicated immaturity is a factor in inappropriate behavior.**
  - “*Makes sense to me. In that the 18- to 22-year-old student here is immature in their ability to have relationships.*” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated sexual harassment and sexist behavior are cultural issues and that gender inequality is a driving factor.**
  - “*Another root of some sexist behavior that you do hear about a lot goes back to the physical fitness exams and different scales that the women are graded on. And the men are very offended by that, many of them, and they're not shy about telling.*” (Faculty)
  - “*And the women get better grades.*” (Faculty)
  - “*Sometimes I will see woman talking more crude behavior about other women about their activities, and I'm just wondering if that was taken into account. You hear it once and a while walking down the halls. ‘Hey, what are you talking about? That's not right you should be talking about that person that way,’ and they don't realize they're talking.*” (Military)
  - “*I have men's and women's teams that co-exist. And what I've seen is that the men, when they get together, they're boys or men. They tell stories and jokes and think they're funny, and the women don't really like their jokes, their stories and they roll their eyes and they do their thing. But I think that proximity, if the guys could be totally separate and do their thing, then it wouldn't necessarily affect the women or offend the women. I don't think they're trying to offend the women. I think, just saying, they're being boys, 18, 19 years olds just doing their thing. And the women, when they're privy to it, they hear it. They hear what's going on. It's never, at least I haven't seen it, directed towards the women.*” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff do not think cadets learn how to have healthy relationships at the Academy.**
  - “*I have wondered since I've been here, whether our monastic culture contributes to it. As much as the sexism, so the fact that our cadets don't hold hands, they don't wink at each other, they don't have dances on base. There's no sexuality practice, courting rituals that would be appropriate that you would see in a traditional campus. They don't know how to do it, because they're so afraid.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I think that it should be about healthy relationships and not about, ‘Is this a sexual assault or not,’ or ‘Is this restricted or nonrestricted?’ Because I think that's what we tend to focus on. But let's talk about healthy relationships and what that all means.*” (Military)
  - “*At a civilian school a woman learns what a safe place is and what a safe place is not. They learn.*” (Faculty)

- “*I think they're socially stunted to a degree. So they go to a bar and they don't know how to pick up a woman. Or a man. They don't know how to pick up anyone. And we've definitely had cases where women have sort of reported sexual harassment from our students, not because it was really intended as sexual harassment, but because they were socially awkward and said something they would say to their fellow cadets. And that was a fun mast. They are socially stunted because they don't have these social skills. And they don't have these social skills because we don't allow them to have the experiences in which they can build.*” (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff do not think cadets have many social opportunities at the Academy.**
  - “*I think you can have a movie in the hall or having a bowling alley open or having the Dry Dock open on Friday nights so students can get through there. It closes at seven. I understand there's staffing issues and things, but at some point there literally isn't anything for them to do on base. I'm not saying we need to have sock hops and everything else, but something.*” (Faculty)
  - “*You can't goof off and be yourself if you're here.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I wonder if there are practices. That's what I was saying. It is odd that we're in some ways a college campus. We're also a college campus, but we have no social events on base. That's a little weird. We have those big formal dances, but just, karaoke or the Thursday night social dance or the hop. Laser tag, everybody's going to play laser tag, things that. Maybe this sounds really hokey, but that's what other colleges have, and I feel our cadets, they don't ever get to do that with each other here.*” (Faculty)
  - “*Their perception is you go outside the gates to have fun. You do not have fun inside the gates. They tried to work a little towards this – by the Dry Dock there's a little student lounge. It's used for sleeping. I don't think it's used for having fun. There's a pool table there. And I think the thought in creating that space was somewhere to go on a Friday night, but Dry Dock is closed Friday night.*” (Faculty)
  - “*Sit around a laptop. There are still sometimes films on base and things like that. But there's very limited things. So indeed and unfortunately, they get into a bunch of trouble.*” (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff indicated cadets have trouble with social situations when they join the fleet.**
  - “*There are some things I would say our first and second class cadets are leaps and bounds ahead of their peers. For instance, there was an incident during rock climbing with them back when we had a rock climbing class. Somebody fell. They just snapped to order there. Everything was so impressive. But then when*

*you talk to them about going out on the weekend – I'm not going to say everybody who binge drank when I was an undergraduate was under 21. But I think a lot of the binge drinking happened under 21. Then when you were 21, you would go to the bar and have a pint with your friends. And they don't have that evolution.”*

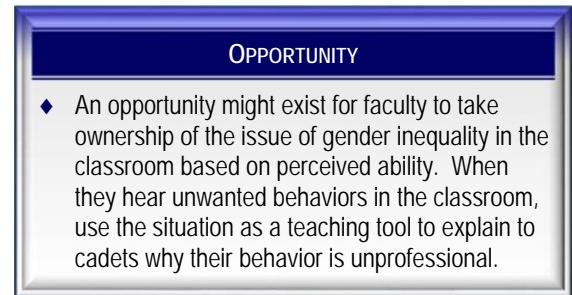
(Faculty)

- “*And we don't allow them. A lot of people who go to a civilian college, their freshman year is about testing the limits, testing the boundaries, figuring out who you are, having to be responsible for getting to your classes, having to be responsible for having your own success or failure. That is not an option here.*”
- “*Here's another anecdote. So we have students who graduate and then end up spending the summer here helping with their summer training. And they're going off to flight school. For a number of years I have watched them. They're very mature. They look immaculate. They're very responsible for coming to work and doing everything, but they don't know how to cook. They're missing some of these very basic life skills. They're trying to find apartments at their next base. They're coming, ‘I don't know how to do this. Go on Craig's List?’ So in some ways they're extremely mature. They can give wonderful presentations of our students versus other graduate students. And they have this professionalism. But at the same time, they're missing the very basics. This cadet bought a pack of 24 burgers frozen and cooked all 24 of them because he didn't know you didn't have to cook the whole box. Every time he bought something, he would cook the entire thing.*”
- “*They don't know how to pay bills.*” (Faculty)
- “*I think this all comes back to the gender issues and the fact they haven't learned, they're sort of socially stunted in a way. You hear about these cadets. They go out they're almost overwhelmed being in a real world. They run into one of their classmates, even someone they hate, and they're like, ‘Friend, someone I recognize.’ Think of it as a thousand-person fraternity. And that's really what the barracks is in some ways, this big fraternity, and they get out to the real world.*”
- **Faculty and staff indicated rank and class year may be a factor in developing relationships.**
  - “*It's a military environment. It's a very highly enforced class structure. So first class have power over second class over third, who have power over third class. So I think sometimes that power can be abused, and I think the person who is at the fourth class and talking with the second class doesn't feel empowered to say anything like, ‘That was inappropriate,’ because it's an upper class. And you don't say things like that to upper class. So I think they're stuck in that situation.*”

- Faculty and staff indicated gender inequality in the classroom is based on perceived ability.
  - “But like I feel that there's an ostracization if somebody is not mathematically strong, and that's perceived as being feminine. One woman I had last semester and this semester I will overhear and then stifle talk about, ‘Oh, you're stupid.’ It may not be overtly, ‘You're stupid because you are a girl,’ but the intimation is there. And she really was not mathematically prepared to be at this institution. But the implication that it is – I can't separate the gender component of it from the way they're saying it. At the same time, I feel I have some minority males in my class who people are not going to broach the topic with, but I feel like it's the silent undercurrent there. And maybe they know that they can't make racial assumptions, but they don't know that they can't make gender assumptions.” (Faculty)
  - “My favorite, I was sitting in class. I was helping some students who were doing an in-class activity, and a male student said to a female student, ‘Well, girls shouldn't be doing engineering.’ I was standing five feet away. ‘We're going to have this conversation.’ But I definitely heard a lot of in technical courses, ‘Oh, you only got in here because you're a girl.’” (Faculty)
  - “Especially as they get to be upper class, they tend to lose their filter in lab and forget instructors are there. I'll hear students, ‘Oh, the only reason you got in here is because you're a girl,’ or, ‘Girls can't do engineering,’ or, ‘Girls can't do math.’ And from some male students that I think very highly of sometimes and I'm sure they don't quite realize the implications of what they're saying. But it is certainly not uncommon to hear, at least I've heard it a lot in the engineering building.” (Faculty)

### **Relationship to Unwanted Sexual Contact**

- Faculty and staff indicated the progression of unwanted gender-related behaviors to USC makes sense.
  - “Sure. I think obviously there's a correlation here. It doesn't surprise me.” (Military)
  - “I definitely think there's a link. That hypothesis makes sense that there's that slippery slope. I don't think necessarily that every cadet who maybe makes a sexist comment or says something like that is automatically then going to be a



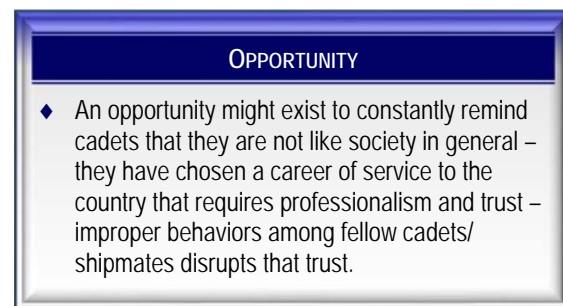
*perpetrator of sexual assault. But I definitely think that if there's someone who's sexually assaulting someone, absolutely.”* (Military)

- “*I think it's kind of testing the waters. So if a person doesn't say anything about this, maybe they won't say anything if I try.*” (Military)
- “*Building their courage as well to proceed doing what they're doing.*” (Military)
- “*It is a slippery slope, and I think if people feel they can get away with A, B, C, maybe they can get away with that. And I think if we put some energy and emphasis on stopping just the comments and the harassment and the jokes that we wouldn't even have to worry about the other stuff. I think that would take away most of the other stuff, probably not all, but most of the other stuff.*” (Military)
- **One participant offered a different perspective on the progression of behavior theory.**
  - “*I'm wondering if the converse is true. Somebody is assaulted, therefore they get harassed much more. Because I have seen that in the cadet corps.*” (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff indicated they do not typically hear offensive language or observe offensive behaviors during the workday.**
  - “*Maybe the chiefs probably get more into than we, but as far as my level, I don't hear about this stuff.*” (Military)
  - “*Unless it's reported to them on a one-on-one private victims kind of thing. But I don't think we're involved as much to hear their daily interactions of who they're pursuing or anything. I don't think they feel comfortable to talk to us about that, unless we overhear it by accident. That would usually be the case.*” (Military)
  - “*That's where a lot of it happens. A lot of counseling I've done is literally going in to use the head and overhear something where you are in a position where you're obligated to address it.*” (Military)
  - “*We don't see the cadets in that environment. Your survey should probably include something like, 'Where's the hot spot?' We have separate locker rooms. We share a training room, male, female, which some colleges don't or have more facilities to have those. You've got a very few common areas and our area than we have probably up in Chase, which is more that 24/7 kind of thing. I just took a road trip with a men's and women's team. We shared a bus. It was as positive a road trip as I've been around in years. But I did notice at dinner, when we went out for dinner on Friday, all the girls sat together and all the guys sat together. There were two tables. And we didn't set it up. So I noticed that, and maybe they're just more comfortable and enjoy each other's company, chitchatting about things they want to chitchat about more.*” (Athletic)

- “*We're also teachers. I see your faculty, athletic staff. We're a different breed of cat here. We do it all. A lot of us teach freshmen or the fourth class wellness, and from time to time we have the kids give a presentation. And I get them into groups of two. And from time to time a couple of guys – these are fourth class freshmen – their presentation will, in an attempt at humor, begin to broach on uncomfortable for the girls. And as instructors, we're all, ‘Oh, my God. You have to stop it.’ It doesn't really happen that much as they get older here. It seems like it's maybe an immaturity factor to it.*” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated cadets reflect attitudes and behavior from society.**
  - “*However, I'll say to the other guys who ride the bus with me, we come back with a big game, and I allow them to put the movie on. I walk around the bus and say, ‘This is a sexually offensive movie.’ There's maybe no female managers on this bus and the response I get from everyone is, ‘This is not. This is what everybody in society is watching.’*” (Athletic)
  - “*This is probably occurring as much in their free time or the movies they watch or whatever they do than it is in the actual Academy. I'm seeing more of that from the outside coming in than I am the actual cadets. I'm walking around that Academy, the bus saying, ‘This is offensive.’ These are cadets. And it's not more than an R rated verbal, the four letter words thrown about in a comical sense. There are no females on the bus. The managers were on the other bus. But still I see it as offensive. No one else here at the Academy, people that are graduating to be officers, see it as offensive. And the response is, ‘Coach, that's what all movies are now.’*” (Athletic)
  - “*We watched a movie on the bus, and I was squirming a couple times. It was a coed bus. I was like, ‘Holy crap, I can't believe the girls are laughing at this.’ But they were. But I know all of them weren't. But some were.*” (Athletic)
  - “*You got this Coast Guard Academy that's stuck in 1955, or trying to hold on to 1955. And you've got these cadets who are getting hammered with this outside media stuff and this pop culture that it's not any of the values that we're trying to move forward with in the Coast Guard Academy.*” (Athletic)

### **Faculty and Staff Recommendations**

- **Teach cadets to be more careful during summer assignments.**
  - “*I think we could be more careful on summer assignments. Particularly when we send third class cadets without firsties to a station, it's entirely enlisted personnel.*



*The only people they can hang out with are young enlisted people who are about their age who aren't very smart about things either, and nobody knows the rules, and they get themselves into trouble.”* (Faculty)

- “*The Women's Leadership Council that was just started last year has started having a before you go afloat session for the summer, they did it last year and I know Commander Pavolonis is thinking about doing it again exactly because the feedback was, ‘I don't know how to handle this.’ For some cadets they came to her, female cadets, and asked, ‘There's all this swearing. Am I supposed to swear back?’ Some charming things but then other more worrisome things. So the leadership council, it's voluntary but it's something.*” (Faculty)

### ***Reporting***

The purpose of this section was to gain additional understanding of why, even with all of the emphasis on USC and zero tolerance, cadets are still reluctant to report their experiences. Faculty and staff offered a number of potential reasons, especially the perceived repercussions from reporting. The section ended with faculty and staff providing recommendations to remove barriers to reporting.

#### ***Reasons for Not Reporting***

- Faculty and staff shared their reactions to the number of reports filed.
  - “*There are investigations going on. I can't specifically say – I know of one or two. But I can't say that figure surprises me, but I could also tell you that I did not know of those seven cases. So I know that there's investigations going on, but whether I knew specifically those seven, no.*” (Athletic)
  - “*Probably a reason you never heard of it. Somebody doesn't want to report.*” (Athletic)
- Military personnel indicated cadets are hesitant to report USC for fear of not being believed or damaging their reputation.
  - “*I think I also hear they don't think people will believe them, because our corps is very small and rumors, you're a slut, people aren't going to believe you.*” (Military)
  - “*That goes across the board anyway with a lot of women especially. People don't think they're going to believe them. They don't want to make it public, don't want to take that chance.*” (Military)
  - “*Reputation, being labeled here to be a troublemaker, you don't want to be that girl. I think some of our numbers are underrepresented and things happen and*

#### **OPPORTUNITY**

- ◆ An opportunity might exist for coaches, military members, and faculty to discuss these USC issues with cadets without triggering a full report.

*they don't want to talk about it. And I think they'll come to us more freely. Yes, there's a legal obligation. At what point do we go forward? But at what point do you have to just let them talk as well?"* (Athletic)

- *"I don't know if they believe the system will hold the person accountable, but I think, going back to the rumor, what people are going to say about them. The age group we're dealing with is more of a concern – I think they do think the person will get in trouble. I think their greater concern is their reputation and how people talk about them."* (Military)
- *"I think the underlying fear is they're going to get kicked out. So if there's some way to get that message through that they're not going to get kicked out. If they're assaulted, then they're punished by getting kicked out."* (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated cadets are more likely to report severe behaviors.**
  - *"More aggressive it's going to be reported as opposed to some of the more nonaggressive."* (Military)
  - *"I think it also might depend on the context. Where if it's something on the continuum as far as egregious and it's a little bit less, and they're able to just address it, 'Hey, I don't appreciate that stuff,' they may not feel compelled because they feel that it's been handled, and especially even more so if there's other variables, like it started out as consensual and maybe they consumed alcohol and they shouldn't have – all those variables might keep them more inclined to not report it and just handle it."* (Military)
- **Faculty and staff indicated cadets are prepared to deal with subordinates coming to them for help.**
  - *"They would have to do exactly what we do and go find a manual."* (Faculty)
  - *"Hopefully they would know to ask questions and would know what to do but probably wouldn't know off the top of their head unless they were a member of CASA."* (Faculty)

### **Faculty and Staff Recommendations**

- **Create safer reporting options.**
  - *"I would say the way to overcome that fear is for individuals to get counseling and not feel that the system – not this system – but the system will take action. It's to instill that someone cares and will actually take them seriously, regardless of whether it's male on male, female on female. So starting there to be public process."* (Military)
  - *"But can't two people who have consensual sex here at this Academy get thrown out of the Academy? So if you have two people who have consensual sex get*

*thrown out, they're keeping permissible thing that society says is permissible a secret. Then you already built a code of secrecy that doesn't even exist at any other college. It's underground to start with.”* (Athletic)

- **Create a climate where counseling is seen as a good resource for cadets.**
  - “*It's a compounding effect. We don't have good counseling. We don't have any resources here like a ‘normal’ college. And I think we're lacking here. But I don't think we have strong outside resources.*” (Athletic)
  - “*I was going to say maybe creating a culture of a counseling center that doesn't have such stigma. I don't know where it is. Maybe in the basement somewhere. Maybe creating something that is more positive and doesn't just focus on a negative. A lot of places have just buildings themselves like a women's center or something on campus that's very welcoming for anything. I'm not just saying for women, but in general there doesn't seem like there's anywhere to go. Most schools will have their own building dedicated to that stuff.*” (Athletic)
  - “*Maybe they take their PFT when they get weighed in, have a mental health screen or something where they have the opportunity two or three times a year to talk to somebody.*” (Athletic)
  - “*But they document every time you walk in [to see the Chaplain]. They document it in your medical record. So there's your anonymity right there. Don't document it. They talk to us hopefully for the most part we keep our confidence. I'm not going to judge them based on she screwed up this weekend or she did this. We're free. We're safe. I'm not going to mark their OBR. What am I going to do? Bench them?*” (Athletic)
  - “*I just think that the counseling center is just this dungeon underground where two people sit in the office. There is nowhere someone can go just for anything, whether it's women's studies or what if I want to go and talk about my fear on the diving board going backwards because I'm nervous to do that. There is no sports psychology stuff to create a whole environment that is for counseling and that's where the CASA office is or that's where the counselors are, this whole area that can surround both the cadets working with cadets and grownups working with cadets and then the social issue – there is no coffeehouse on campus. We went to a birthday party at the bowling alley. And there's like this little room they can sit and watch TV and play pool. There are three kids in there half asleep. There's nothing, nowhere for anyone to go. When they're on campus, they're sitting in their room doing nothing, the environment.*” (Athletic)
- **Provide more effective training that holds the attention of cadets.**
  - “*There's no free time for them. Even when they have training, the military's idea for a solution to a problem is to have training.*” (Athletic)

- “They don't listen. They don't care to listen. They're exhausted. Half of them fall asleep. It's another training. Another training at seven in the morning. If you start to develop a place maybe where they want to learn about something or they have an interest in it.” (Athletic)
- “West Point I thought had done a nice job. It seemed like there was a lot of intrinsic buy with the center for enhanced study or enhanced performance. It was shrinks, and it was a variety with different kind of focuses. There was an athletic component, academic component. If you were going in and you wanted help, working on probability statistics, you'd go in, meet with one of the professionals, and I think there are psychologists and psychiatrists, and they would work with you on that specific component. It could be athletic performance. It could be social interaction. They had little pods. There must have been a congressional line item somewhere, but there was a lot of money thrown at it. But the buy in was great, there was a football lineman listening to something in a little pod and there was somebody who was meeting in a closed door meeting, obviously didn't look like an athlete.” (Athletic)

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

In this section of questions, participants were asked how they perceived their roles with respect to preventing and responding to USC. They were asked to describe the interactions they have with students on these issues, their interactions with the SAPR staff, and recommendations for helping them better deal with issues.

### **Perceived Roles**

- **Faculty and staff see themselves as mentors and advisors.**
  - “It's funny. I sometimes think I need one degree in my area and two degrees in psychology to work here. Because I'd say a lot of our job – we teach and we teach quite a bit actually. But we're mentors. We're advisers. I mean on any moment you can walk into my office and the odds are there's a cadet in there and may be talking about my courses, but more often they're talking about their father had a heart attack or their boyfriend dumped them or something happened in class, they're just stressed out and they just need somebody to talk to. So certainly part of our job is correcting poor behavior, and certainly when I see that, I correct poor behavior. And sometimes you need to do that publicly, sometimes pull the cadet aside privately. There's a lot of ways of handling different situations. But I really feel a lot of our role here is mentor and adviser and part-time parent or aunt.” (Faculty)
  - “There are some mentorship programs, but not everyone has a mentor. Everyone has an academic adviser and a military adviser. A lot of them have coaches, what we call their physical health and wellness advisers. And there are some other formal mentorship programs, but they're usually optional for the students.” (Faculty)

- “*I think it's our role to at least ask the questions. I think by doing that it starts a conversation. Maybe they'll think twice or share that with another cadet. That's the other part, our interaction.*” (Military)
  - “*We're building leaders of character. That's definitely.*” (Military)
  - “*All of this stuff is a clear violation of corps value of respect, so we all have a duty to address it.*” (Military)
- **Faculty and staff indicated relationships between cadets and staff vary, especially for USC reporting.**
  - “*It depends on if they want to come forward. Because if they talk to us about it, we're not private reporting.*” (Faculty)
  - “*In the class of 2008, many of those women were third class cadets when there was a – I don't know if we would describe him as a predator or what we would describe him as. But there was a first class cadet who was implicated in a number of assaults. I don't teach anything related to feelings but because I have access to the students for six hours a week in a less formal classroom, I found that I was one of the first lines for many of these women who were victims in this case, on both sides, like one woman saying, 'Hey, I feel bad this happened to my friends, but listen, he came and tried to do this to me too, and I just said, 'Get out of my room.' Whereas, other women in the class were – this is occurring privately in my office, but they're saying this happened or I can't be in class because I'm being interviewed by lawyers. So I think the fact that it turned into a courts-martial facilitated the conversation because they were missing a class. So it depends on the year. It depends on the women. It depends on the men.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I had a student in tears in class at one point, not a student I was particularly close to, absolutely in tears. I said, 'Are you okay?' The student said 'No.' I said 'Well, if you want to talk, come by my office.' Twenty minutes later the student sat down and told me about her sexual assault. I am now very close to this student, who has since graduated and left and gone on to great things in the Coast Guard. So I've had a number of students talk to me about – this one happened to have been a rape, but definitely about sexual assaults or inappropriate things. And I again think being a civilian does help because they're more afraid of talking to people who wear blue about those things because there is more of a reporting type thing.*” (Faculty)
  - “*We are mandated reporters, but there's a level of – I get a little more leeway in that at least on the lower levels, and so I think they feel more comfortable. But, yes, students do come.*” (Faculty)

- **Military personnel can use occurrences as teaching moments.**
  - “*I'm sure there could be, but by the time that happens, the backlash has already occurred. The view of how things should be handled, it's already occurred. The view is already there that, ‘Can I trust this to take place or not? Am I going to believe the rumor mill, or am I going to actually believe the actual report?’ The process is already started, and in the person's mind, the rumors are where they are. And some of the rumors you're not going to change even though the system will attempt to do that. And it's not to say the system should not. But damage has already been done.*” (Military)
  - “*We also do put out good order disciplines on all our kind of cases. We had an overload over the years. We're behind in those. We're going to send one. Get caught up.*” (Military)
  - “*I think in those situations there's always going to be a level of institutional trust or lack thereof for some certain things. So I'm going to believe my friend, who is 21 years old, just like I am, over Commander so-and-so whatever regardless. So I think some of that there's a level of that as well.*” (Military)
  - “*I can't speak for everyone, but I know many of us have dealt with situations where you'll overhear a bit of things and it's rumor mill and try to inject some reason and facts into it. But I think a lot of that boils down to just relying on peers to get ‘accurate information’ versus really seeking out to get the real facts.*” (Military)
- **Coaches see themselves as a source of help for gender-related issues.**
  - “*I'll go back to one of my first meetings here with the Commandant of Cadets was regarding prior to me getting here all the shenanigans on the away trips. So I would definitely view our policy, the guys who coach with me as an authority policy. Here's the set rules. If we have female managers, no one goes in the room. It's more of an authoritative, strict structure. That's how I would view that. Kids come into their office and say all the screwups they've done, even this year. Here's what I'm getting masted for. Here's what I did. At the same time, I still think they view us as authoritative figure in terms of that. On the road trips. But I don't know what goes on at Chase Hall. You talk about what they do on their own time. I'm not sure what goes on up here.*” (Athletic)
  - “*If they get in trouble and maybe related to a sexual activity of some kind, they will many times come to coaches for support and help.*” (Athletic)
  - “*They're looking for ‘How am I going to get through this?’*” (Athletic)
- **Coaches believe students are more likely to go to upperclassmen for help.**
  - “*I think there's a trust built up between certain upperclass cadets and whether they're part of one of my programs or just someone individually. That's supposed*

*to happen that way, but I still think if they have a good relationship with somebody, it doesn't have to be current in their chain of command but could be past, they may feel a little more comfortable.”* (Athletic)

- “*They're in the company. I think the older I get the less comfortable they are with me, the less I hear. But if the poo hits the fan, I'll be the first one to lay it in.*” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated the goals for diversity can sometimes lead to beliefs that decisions are not based on merit alone.**
  - “*There are still undercurrents. The place where we see it the most, and this is actually not cadet, but I'm sure it filters down through a lot of their favorite teachers, but when a female gets hired for a position, whether it's permanent commission teaching staff, whether it's civilian faculty, often the white males who are not selected for that same position are very bitter and very resentful and they're openly stating that they believe the person got it because they're a female.*” (Faculty)
  - “*That is like wildfire. Even if the discussion isn't directly directed at the students or even in front of the students, but they're around the periphery and they are absolutely picking up on it.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I think that's one of the negative side effects of such a focus on diversity is that it seems to imply that that is somewhere on the meritocracy scale, such as if you're saying diversity is that important, then it's only natural you're going to think that race or sex or these other things as opposed to merit are going to influence the process. So I would like to hope that always the best person for whatever job it is, whether you're talking about billets and putting them on ships or PTCS or faculty, that's the best person regardless of their race or sex or nationality or anything else. But I think there's such a drumbeat of diversity that constantly tells you it's so important that we have more women and we have more minorities and more this and more this, that I think it's only natural that there is a concern that these other things are being taken into consideration on par with merit, with their ability and things like that. So I think if someone is being picked because they're a woman or man, that's wrong. So hopefully that's not happening, but I think that it's natural for that to be the perception for some people.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I've seen a ton of these things. You try to account for that by building up a strong pool, but everybody is there in the interest of trying to pick the best person. But part of what you run into, the best person is different. So if you have six people on a committee, you have a lot of different opinions on who's the best person. So there's a lot of discussion and compromise and stuff that comes out of it.*” (Faculty)

- Faculty and staff indicated emphasis from senior leaders about their response to sexual assault and harassment is helpful.
  - “*Bringing that back and refocusing on what's really important, make sure we get rid of the sexual assault and harassment that goes on here. That prevention part is huge, and that education part as well. That's all we can really do. And then when it happens, I think we have to put a firm stance on it that this will not be tolerated and take it to the highest level that it needs to go to the next time it happens. Because then people know the severity that when they violate this, this is not tolerated, period, whatsoever.*” (Military)
  - “*The response has to be clear and cut*” (Military)
  - “*As far as the training goes, the Captain's support of us to go to the A training, assist training, they're very supportive of that. It's huge. And it's not always like that other places.*” (Military)
  - “*I think regarding the cadet side, we need to make sure we make an emphasis that, for example, if you undergo the training round, provide better training. That training shouldn't be at five o'clock in the morning. It needs to be important enough to disrupt their daily routine to do this. That's how important this is. That's not something you get to after your school work. This is not something you get to after you play football. I think we need to stop all that and be, 'This is the focus of this day, this week.' By some way, shape, or form demonstrate the emphasis, the importance of what's going on.*” (Military)

### **Interactions with SAPR Staff**

- Personnel interact with SAPR staff differently or as needed.
  - “*The SARC has changed three times over the last four years. I think we just hired a SARC actually.*” (Faculty)
  - “*There hasn't been an announcement made to the faculty. As I said, I think we've had three, maybe four SARCs.*” (Faculty)
  - “*It would be nice to at least know who the SARC is, how to contact them, and maybe some of the services they provide at a minimum, because I do remember the SARC maybe three years ago. It was a woman. So it was at least two SARCs ago who did a training at one of the sexual assaults trainings.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I think a lot of people don't know who they are, where to find them, or what they can do in what cases.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I would like to see [the SARC information] posted in some hallways so subtly I could walk out and be like, okay, that's what I do.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I don't know who's on the SARC.*” (Athletic)

- “We don't know anything about that.” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff indicated they have not been recently trained in sexual assault prevention and response.**
  - “Haven't been taught anything since 2008.” (Faculty)
  - *“That happened to me. The first phone call I said, ‘Where is the sexual assault manual? We have to have one. Where is it?’ And I had to go read it that night because I had no idea what the reporting chain was. I had no idea what I was supposed to do. I was completely freaking out.”* (Faculty)
  - *“If you weren't here during that courts-martial, you wouldn't know.”* (Faculty)
  - *“They talked about it briefly actually when they went over to do the survey reports with people. Again, those were optional sessions people chose to come to if their schedule allowed. So those of us who were there, basically they were stressing, send them to counseling because you're not equipped.”* (Faculty)
  - *“As they've rewritten the sexual assault manual in the last two years. I went to look at the manual, and it changed. So I don't think people have been briefed that it's changed. I don't think most people on base would know what their mandated reporting – I think they probably do what I do, which is, ‘Oh, my gosh, where's the manual?’”* (Faculty)
  - *“I would say a lot of the faculty really care about the students, and, therefore, we are proactive. Certainly if I see a student in distress or things, we'll reach out, not necessarily push them, but, ‘Hey, look we're here. Whether you want to talk to me or the chaplains or the counselors or whoever it is, there are lots of people here. Here are some resources.’ So I think a lot of faculty will reach out, but I wouldn't say there's been any formal training.”* (Faculty)
  - *“We have a little card, and there have been trainings – there hasn't been them in a long time. But there are trainings you can be like a victim advocate with the unrestricted, like restricted person to go through. We went through trainings. Some females went through trainings on how to deal with that stuff.”* (Athletic)
  - “That was, honestly, five, six years ago.” (Athletic)
  - *“We are held responsible for going through the training. Whether we go through the acquisition.”* (Athletic)

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- ◆ An opportunity might exist to train faculty members on how to best interact with cadets who come to them for help and support. Providing a “checklist” or protocol for them to follow might be beneficial in disseminating the correct information.

- **Faculty are actively engaged with students and are a part of the sexual assault prevention and response process.**
  - “*We have these equity officers. Every department is supposed to have an equity officer, and that person is supposed to be reflecting proactive, observant around any myriad of things. This is from the Diversity Office. So that person in a department is supposed to be someone that other people could come to and say, ‘What do I do? How do I do it?’ Or, ‘This situation seems to be developing in my classroom. Can you advise me?’*” (Faculty)
  - “*I think it is undeveloped, but it's been implemented since I've been here, so relatively new.*” (Faculty)
  - “*It seemed fairly active the first year, but lately if you ask our equity officer, we've had no meetings. Nothing's going on.*” (Faculty)
  - “*Online training every year. That's not Academy specific.*” (Faculty)
  - “*It does talk about restricted reporting and unrestricted reporting, but it's not specific to the Academy where it's actually guiding you of who. If I hadn't been at this meeting, I wouldn't know that Karen Smith is currently the only person other than the counselors you can turn to.*” (Faculty)
  - “*And Doc Murray solicits people for sexual assault victims' advocacy training. He'll send out an e-mail every now and then. My training was back in that case in 2006, 2007, 2008. But all of us are so busy, I don't know who's going to these trainings.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I think there's in some departments a culture that discourages one from choosing that as the way to do your collateral work.*” (Faculty)
  - “*The things that are very cadet centered I sometimes find at the mid-grade.*” (Faculty)
  - “*Just about every class, when you see it, you address it. When you see inappropriate behavior, most faculty members will address it.*” (Faculty)
- **Faculty are not aware of what information is available to cadets about USC.**
  - “*I suspect there's a student sexual assault group.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I suspect most of the students know who the CASA members in their companies are, but I suspect the student body as a whole probably not.*” (Faculty)

- Faculty would send cadets to the counselor or the chaplain, but prefer chaplains.
  - “I have recommended students go there though we now have two counselors, and some of the students, you can hear mixed reviews on some of the counselors. Some of them really like them, and other people don’t. So depending on who you ask.” (Faculty)
  - “I have found them to be incredibly helpful in the situations where I’ve needed them, where I had a student who was – I don’t want to go as far as suicidal ideations, but I’m not sure – and I worked with both counselors a lot on that. And they were very helpful. I don’t know how well received they are in these sort of talk therapy.” (Faculty)
  - “I would say more students use the chaplains for counselors. They use chaplains.” (Faculty)
  - “[The Chaplain] because they’re trying to protect their confidentiality. So there is still a stigma associated with going to counseling, some of it based on misunderstanding, but I think they’re clearer that the chaplains will hold whatever they say in confidence. And also, I think certain things of masculinity. I’m not going to talk to somebody about my problems. I can handle everything myself. That goes with both men and women. No one is a victim here. We can manage everything.” (Faculty)
  - “You can make an excuse to be in upper Leamy and just drop by to say hi; whereas, if you are in the counselor’s office or in that office area, you have walked into the clinic. It is less of a social call that turns into discussing things. You need to be going with a specific purpose of counseling to go to the counselor; whereas, with the chaplains, office in Leamy, duty officer.” (Faculty)
  - “The majority of our students I think are students of faith. So dropping into a chaplain’s office feels expected.” (Faculty)
  - “But I believe the counselors are quite busy. I believe they’re pretty busy. They make time whenever someone needs them. They’re not sitting around waiting for people to show up.” (Faculty)
  - “They’re on call on the weekends. I had one come in during the week or on the weekend and physically get a cadet from the barracks to the ward. So they will.” (Faculty)
  - “I would also like to say they would get more mileage out of the counselors if the counselors were in different form. So you’ve got two counselors are Coast Guard and in order for the cadets to have access, they have to make an appointment and

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- ◆ An opportunity might exist to make cadets feel more comfortable interacting with counselors by encouraging counseling staff to be more visible on campus, (e.g., helping at sports practices and becoming better known).

*they go over there and they have to walk in there. And yet if a counselor just maybe came to track practice and grabbed a stopwatch and timed kids for a month and just read off times, I think that they might find that the barrier is going to be broken. If a counselor just came and volunteered at wrestling practice for half a year, kids would start to talk to the counselors on a different level. A lot of ways the counselor is like a dentist. We're the loneliest doctors. We drill their teeth and inflict pain. That's the counselors. They're lonely people here, whereas the company officers who come down and volunteer with our team, they can say what they want. They get more tuned in to the cadets in their hour and a half with our team than they will sitting in their office in Chase Hall where cadets are going to walk in. It's not happening like it does with us. It's a different environment. There's a certain level of trust that's built in our arena with our people on a day-to-day basis. We care about performance, but the bottom line is that we care. So you've got another level laid in. It's very special, and that's part of why we probably got into coaching. But the nuts and bolts are maybe what we're getting at, maybe people should be counselors who are coaches and that's all they do, that's it. They're not teachers. They're just out there. They're circulating." (Athletic)*

- “*Chaplains will come to different team functions.*” (Athletic)
- “*Right when they get here Swab Summer starts. And the kids are struggling through it mentally. And it's the right time to go start to develop a relationship with a counselor. If you go to the chaplain, that's chaplain time. Everybody goes to the chaplain. That's pretty much very well received by your cadre and other classmates. But if you decided to go to the counselor, they document it.*” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff see Victims' Advocates as viable and useful tools.**
  - “*I think they do, and I think chiefs do a great job also. They're part of their command structure as well. So something else we're doing to try to reach out is training coaches to be victims' advocates as well. They're outside of the barracks, outside of Chase Hall, where they might be more approachable to get a report. Something where the Coast Guard sexual assault division will give training to some of the coaches. The case we had last year, both cadets were in the same company, so he [the victims' advocate] was in their chain of command both cadets. It worked out well. It worked out fine. He stepped out of the chain of command. I dealt with the company officer with more of the command issues, and he dealt with the victim.*” (Military)
- **Faculty and staff indicated cadets receive training from CASA members.**
  - “*The cadets will run it, Cadets Against Sexual Assault program, they will run it. Yes, the cadets will [train themselves].*” (Military)
  - “*I think it's led by the CASA representatives?*” (Military)

- Faculty and staff do not think the sexual assault prevention and response training cadets receive is effective.
  - “I think it's terrible. The scenarios are all really outdated. They're old school. They're not up to date, how young people interact today. And the answer to every scenario is always yes, no matter what it is. They don't even have to pay attention. They say yes, yes, yes. They get it all right. That's something that we've talked about, having cadets rewrite the scenarios so there are actually things they might have to encounter or the answer is actually ‘No,’ so it makes it a situation where it isn't a sexual assault they can clearly identify that one separately, then also try to bring in some kind of outside resources. We have some with the group in New London that has gone to Mitchell College and does some training, then another one I think in 2009 Sex Signs. We're going to bring them in, give some updated, kind of edgy training. The Superintendent really supports all those kind of things.” (Military)
  - “That's some of the upsetting part because upon review of some of this data, the fundamental aspects of what our policies say our procedures are and those things we were discussing before are clearly missed because our policies for the restricted, unrestricted pathway exist for victim versus the focus. When you look at some of the data, who would you go to, to make a restricted report? And the answer – there was a high rate of incorrect answers. A lot of times some of the scenarios seem to be focused on, which of course has some validity to it, but the fundamentals of what the program looks like and some of the intrusive leadership saying not only this is what the program looks like and here is why, and let me use a scenario that it may be modeled out. I have to agree that it's not good.” (Military)
  - “For years we developed these scenario-based trainings, which I believe has a lot of validity to it, somehow stepping away too we've been on the downswing of the emphasis. We failed – really missing the fact that this policy from our senior leadership in the organization has been worked on very well. And we're finally connecting the dots between what's been happening to our work force for decades essentially where we've been removing people medically from the service because they're a victim of assault and reclassifying them because they never had a means, never had an unrestricted pathway. And by not ensuring having some sort of check sum that people are obtaining and retaining this very simple amount of knowledge, it's painful to see that it's happening, and it may be reflective in some of these rates.” (Military)
  - “They hate it.” (Faculty)
  - “PowerPoint, dark lights. That's what I hear.” (Faculty)
  - “We had a training that was maybe a year or two ago. They had a group come in and do skits and things like that. They did focus groups, and cadets loved it. But someone took offense because they swore – and, again, I think this falls into the,

*'We've always done it this way. That wasn't great, so we're never going to try anything new again. We're going back to the PowerPoint.' So I think there's this, cultural thing of, we can't push the boundaries at all. And I think on sexual assault, sometimes you have to make people a little uncomfortable." (Faculty)*

- *"Choose the times that they give it. And, it's not necessarily more training. In fact, I think almost less training may be more impactful. Instead of having the monthly sexual assault training where it's, 'God, another one,' having it once or twice a year but having something that really makes an impact." (Faculty)*
- *"It could be a cadet-led training. Cadets will listen to cadets." (Faculty)*
- *"I like the idea of it being in a class. We have morals and ethics class, which is a corps-wide class. And they do talk about these kinds of issues. And they do it later in the semester because you have to have built trust and – so they've been together for ten weeks, and then they're going to try to talk about – and they read stuff that's about consent, not ostensibly about sexual assault, but they talk about contracts and can you consent to things. So it has this academic part, but then they always very intentionally have this conversation. So I think there are places – because I do think in a room with a hundred other people, or even with a group that you don't know well, even if there are other cadets, it is. It's very difficult to talk about." (Faculty)*
- **Faculty and staff do not believe sexual assault training should be a graded course.**
  - *"Absolutely not. That would devalue it even more. I am ready to take that on. No, I think that would be ruin it." (Faculty)*
  - *"We have an etiquette class. I don't know it works towards that at all." (Faculty)*
- **Faculty and staff noted that the acronym "SARC" is unappealing.**
  - *"That name in itself needs to change. How close is it to narc? SARC, narc? Come on. It's there. Go to your SARC. Come up with a different acronym. The acronyms around here drive you crazy. Make it something different. Make it something welcoming." (Athletic)*

### ***Cultural Change***

The facilitator began this section by stating that some people believe the Academy can improve USC prevention and response by changing the culture and attitudes toward this issue. Participants were asked if they agreed and how such change could be made. The section ended with a question about the usefulness of a Dignity and Respect Code.

## **Need for Cultural Change**

- Faculty and staff indicated there is a need for cultural change in addition to programs.
  - “I think we're finding a cultural issue in terms of the military, ‘We've always done it this way. It works.’ I've been told the discipline system has always worked. Well, is there potentially a better way to be doing this? I think some of the hazing and some of that, I think some of that sexual banter probably predates females at the Academy, and I'm certain that in the eighties that was probably okay. Those women did it, and they're fine. So why do we need to change? But there's this mentality of we've always done it that way, and it works. And so I think sometimes when you have senior people here who graduated in the early eighties or in the seventies even or before, they don't see a reason that we need to change.” (Faculty)
  - “Sometimes I think we have that built-in culture it works; therefore, we will continue doing it. So I think sometimes you have an uphill battle to fight against saying, ‘Well, yes, it works, but really was it the best way of doing it?’ And I think sometimes we have problems embracing change even if it's better because the other way worked, and we don't know if this way worked. And we produced great leaders for a hundred years. Why wouldn't we keep doing that? So I often feel a battle of, ‘Why don't we try something?’ Even pedagogically, we're trying something new in our classroom. We're getting a lot of push-back from some senior people. ‘Why are you changing it?’ Well, let's try it for a semester, see if it works.” (Faculty)
  - “I know we're hammering away here, but we do some things extraordinarily well, and I think we should as an institution have confidence we can do this well too. I hear what you're saying, and I think it is about framing it so that what the narrative is, like we have this astonishing population of 18-year-olds. Really from all the institutions I've ever taught, these are the good people of the earth. And if we can do all the amazing things that we do, surely we can do this too. I think it has to be not the, ‘We're trying to change,’ it's, ‘What do you mean?’ We're building the leaders of tomorrow. Here's one more thing we get to teach them. I don't think it has to make people feel afraid. Plus you can get all those feelings that time it sucks.” (Faculty)
  - “I think the focus actually needs to be on the gender culture of the Academy. And I think that needs to encompass not only how the cadets perceive it and the cadets, but also how the faculty, staff, and command are interacting on a gender basis because that definitely affects the cadets. I don't necessarily think that across the Academy we have a healthy gender relations going on. And I think the cadets really see that, and they pick it up.” (Faculty)

- Faculty and staff indicated cadets' reputations are very important to them. Competition and the size of the student body are factors that impact a student's social standing.
  - “Young adults are just now developing in society and becoming functioning adults. So I think a lot of that has to do with that, constant competition.” (Military)
  - “I think it's a small environment too. Being such a small Academy, it's almost like a high school so everybody knows everything about everybody. So that's why your reputation can easily – whereas, compared to West Point or Air Force Academy – every cadet knows every other, especially upper class to under class. Under class know a lot who the upper class are.” (Military)
  - “Nobody wants to be associated with sexual assault, period. Who can blame them? They don't want to be under a microscope. I don't think it's necessarily reputation. That goes on forever.” (Military)
  - “Especially with women, you're trying to compete for leadership positions and try to look like you're as equal and good as the men. But if you were a victim of sexual assault, maybe she's not as strong. She's not strong enough to be a leader in the corps or whatever.” (Military)
  - “If they get selected for something, they're afraid people treated her differently because of that or cutting her a break. You don't know exactly what goes on through people's minds.” (Military)
  - “These are the minds of adolescents, and they're not always logical.” (Military)
- Faculty and staff discussed methods to change culture and foster civility.
  - “I think we need to point it out at the upper levels and that we need to be conscious of it – I don't know whether it's training or maybe there's a carrot and a stick. But I think that these people who have it engrained in them and think it's okay need to be counseled at the higher levels that it's not okay. And however that needs to be done with, but there's definitely the culture from above coming down. And that needs to be trained out. Whether that's training or counseling, but that because it's this micro-inequities type thing. It's not necessarily the gross sexual harassment. A couple years ago we had a captain – it was our senior presentations day. So there were lots of other Coast Guard people. He said [about a female professor], ‘We didn't have professors that looked like that when

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist to remind faculty, staff, and leaders that their words and actions send messages to the cadets.</li> <li>◆ A shared goal for the culture at the Academy can help foster transition to greater respect and those who might vocally disagree will stand out against that backdrop.</li> </ul>

*I was here' in front of cadets. So we have this fundamental issue that it's happening. If a female cadet sees a professor being cat called, what message does that say?"* (Faculty)

- “*That's the problem. When the woman raises the flag, it's not the guy who's getting punished. [The attitude is] 'And it was just a joke. He didn't really mean it. Yet you're taking it too seriously.' Then it reflects poorly on our evaluations. So I'm almost afraid to report some of these things and that's not a good culture for us to have here. And I worry less about myself because I've grown a pretty thick skin over the years, but I really do worry about the cadets. And I do worry about the impact it has on the cadets and if they see it happening to me that they think it's okay if it happened to them.*” (Faculty)
- **Faculty and staff indicated women seem to be respected overall at the Academy.**
  - “*What I've seen has been mostly positive, but that's been within the last five years.*” (Athletic)
  - “*They're in positions of leadership. They're well respected. That's what I've seen. It's no different from what's going on in the men's side. There are those who are respected in the positions of leadership and then those who aren't. That's what I've seen. That's only observing.*” (Athletic)
  - “*I was here when they first came, and they weren't well respected when they first came. And it's a much different situation today.*” (Athletic)
- **Faculty and staff believe gender relations are better now than over the last decade.**
  - “*In the years I've been here, I think we have gotten better. I believe that that was a stronger sentiment ten years ago.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I heard that a lot in the late eighties.*” (Faculty)
  - “*25 years ago.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I think it's better too.*” (Faculty)
  - “*I feel we've also been pushing diversity more than when I got here, so diversity and admissions and everything. When I was hired, there were two positions opened. They went to two women. Both of us were very well qualified. That process was nearly grieved. And honestly, I don't know if it was with or without merit because I do believe the person on the hiring committee definitely was going to diversify the department. But you have that thing. And so I'm left still wondering. I know I am the best person for this position. However, there's still at least one person out there who didn't get the job who thinks that I was hired just because I was a woman.*” (Faculty)

## **Affecting Cultural Change**

- Faculty and staff indicated the Academy needs to make culture change a priority.
  - “It's making it a priority because everything is a priority. And when everything's a priority, it all becomes as a box that has to be checked, meaning, I'll go to this training. I'll check the box so I'm in compliance with the training requirement versus I'll go to this training and I'm going to learn something and I'm going to be able to apply. So I think my opinion on that is I think the change has to be a priority, and to be a priority it has to be visibly a priority, meaning it's not something that they go to when it can be squeezed in because we have to check the box. It has to be apparent this is important enough to where we're going to disrupt things because it's that important. When that's done, I think that that message carries more weight in my opinion.” (Military)
  - “It's something that needs to be inherent. You were talking about culture change. It needs to be inherent in the culture. Any fourth class cadet, ask what the meals are, ask them what the good news in sports, they're going to give an answer, ask any senior cadets what billets are to float. I can ask what the difference between a restricted and unrestricted pathway, and I'm not going to get the same absolute answer. It's not about those relationships. Those relationships are critical, but if you don't have the basic fundamental understanding, if it's not the core of what you do every day and it's not going to be recognized as a requirement of a commissioned officer, which it is, it fundamentally is talking about doctrine, what's expected, how you need to execute people who are not just your peers affecting take action for people that you manage on the fleet. I can't possibly imagine that if you didn't do the same examinations look at fleet-wide analysis see some of the same things, you're talking about an institute that establishes those leaders and people that set and execute on that policy. It's frightening if you put it into that context.” (Military)
  - “I think that's what we're trying to do with establishing the position and making the CASA president its own job and some of this messaging to stand down with the staff. The fact that the staff is going to do a stand down on it, that's a pretty clear message it's important, and the Superintendent is going to speak at that to everybody.” (Military)
  - “It has tremendous power, the message, if it's coming not just from Chase Hall but athletics and academics. When it's that across the board, it becomes pretty apparent this is not just a box we're checking. It's an expectation. It's a condition of employment this behavior is not tolerated.” (Military)
- The idea of a “stand down” seems to resonate with the staff.
  - “If I can say something, one of the things a number of years ago that was a stand down, talk about stand down for staff faculty, a number of years ago – I don't

*remember what year it was, 2005 or something. We had a stand down for all cadets. And no leave, everybody just this is what we're doing today. I think that was very effective because it was a sort of a line drawn. We're taking this seriously enough to call everybody here to stay here for the day. And it was a bunch of small group sessions and large group sessions, and that's what we did.”* (Military)

- “*I think that's what we're looking to do with them as well after the staff one, do one in April. That was actually brought up last week in the luncheon. We had a lunch last week with the SARC about bring back the night walk during April, observance of Sexual Assault Awareness month on campus.”* (Military)
- “*It sends the message this is important.*” (Military)
- “*That's why we're doing the stand out the staff as well, to do those one-hour sessions so the SARC can get her face out there, number one, so everyone in the whole faculty can know who she is, also get people trained up on those procedures because the online training you can click through it.*” (Military)

### **Dignity and Respect Code**

- Faculty and staff indicated the goals of a Dignity and Respect Code can be achieved through education and social interaction.
  - “*If it was grass roots from the cadets.*” (Military)
  - “*I think the respect code that exists. That's a core value. We have a program for respect remediation for those cadets that violate that core value. I'd like to believe we have it addressed.*” (Military)
  - “*They already have it as a core value.*” (Military)
  - “*We have these things in place already. We just need to use them, we collectively, throughout the campus, the unit, not just the people in this room, not just this one division or that one division. I think Coast Guard is a place, we always throw CASA and stuff into play when this happens. We already have that. We've just got to use it really.*” (Military)

### **Additional Faculty and Staff Recommendations**

The final major area of discussion in the 2013 SAGR focus groups was titled simply “Additional recommendations for addressing USC and sexual harassment.” The purpose was to spend a few minutes reflecting on the general discussion of factors influencing USC at the Academy, including allowing cadets who experienced USC prior to coming to the Academy to receive counseling.

## **Counseling for USC Experienced Prior to Coming to the Academy**

- Faculty and staff indicated the rates for USC prior to coming to the Academy seemed logical.
  - “I think that's consistent with the statistics with the adolescents unwanted sexual contact is about a quarter or a third.” (Military)
  - “We had a couple this summer.” (Military)
  - “It's consistent with society and it's consistent with some speaking up if they feel safe to get further help with their needs are, what that need may be.” (Military)
  - “It makes perfect sense. I think what you find here, you find very few women or men who got here during Swab Summer that would check ‘Yes’ to the box because they wouldn't want to be labeled.” (Athletic)
- Faculty and staff do not think revictimization is unusual.
  - “Absolutely that carries a ton of weight. I'll give you a great example. Speaking to that percentage, I had a swab who came to my company who actually due to the outprocess of a member who assaulted her at her preparatory program was brought back here to the Academy in his outprocessing. And in the process of her showing up brand new here, she crosses paths with this individual. And now she's like traumatized, again, ‘Oh, my Lord, here is this person again who I thought was going to be gone out of my life.’ Now we're rehashing it. Had we had visibility on that here, we could have, made other arrangements and ensured that didn't happen. So I absolutely think it happens. I think that's information that should be shared.” (Military)
  - “I don't think we ask cadets when they come here if they've been a victim. But what I do know is that sometimes if someone's been assaulted or been taken advantage of as – they can sometimes internalize that as that's what they – that's who they are. They're there to be taken advantage of. And they don't necessarily see that they have a right to say no.” (Military)
- Faculty and staff indicated that the Academy should offer counseling and make counseling a more viable option.
  - “I know in some of our debriefs that information comes up. Then collaboration is important to get those persons to the proper resource. And I know where we are that's what we do. When persons come in and they start to divulge, this is what happened and also knowing the fact people are going to come in with those various issues. And now that we know that, it heightens our awareness to say, you're going to have at least 40 percent that will come in with prior issues, so therefore, these are the things that need to be in place because it's part of society.” (Military)

- “*There's a stigma about going to the counselors or seeing the counselors. Kid's having a tough time, somebody dies at home, somebody gets strung, you should go see Doc Murray. ‘No, I'm not going there. Once I go there, I'm in a different group.’*” (Athletic)
- “*I would think reputation more than anything else. Chaplain's office seems like it's a safe place to go. They see chaplains quite a bit, but I don't know if they see Doc Murray as much.*” (Athletic)
- “*We're sort of the ones who say, ‘Go to the counselors,’ because they're trying to dump on us. They're trying to unload. Go to the counselors. We don't keep that in our own areas. Probably every other day in the hallway kind of thing at Coast Guard someone wants to talk to you about something.*” (Athletic)
- **Coaches have a unique opportunity to interact with students on issues such as prior experiences of USC.**
  - “*Perhaps more than anybody on the Academy grounds. We have a relationship with so many of the kids before they got here.*” (Athletic)
  - “*We'll see them. Then I'll get the same reaction. They'd rather go anywhere else but the counselor.*” (Athletic)
  - “*I imagine the female coaches have an additional added responsibility that a lot of the men's coaches don't have, specifically to female coaches who coach female sports. I think they're having conversations that I'm not having.*” (Athletic)

OPPORTUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ An opportunity might exist to create a vehicle for anonymous counseling for cadets who have experienced USC prior to coming to the Academy.</li> <li>◆ Another opportunity might exist to highlight facts about prior experiences of USC during freshmen orientation.</li> </ul>

## **References**

DMDC. (2012). *2012 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey: Survey Note* (Report No. 2012-023). Arlington, VA: Author.

John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007, Pub. L. No. 109-364, H.R. 5122 (2006).



**Appendix A.**  
**USMA Cadet Focus Group Guide**



## 2013 Student Focus Group Guide

### Introduction to the Focus Group

Good morning/afternoon. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am with the Defense Manpower Data Center. My colleagues with me this morning/afternoon are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ also with DMDC. We have asked you to be here with us to help us investigate issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response. You might recall that last year students at your Academy were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey on these topics. This year, as was done two years ago, a series of focus groups are being conducted to provide information to DoD and Academy leadership. Similar focus groups are being conducted at all three DoD Service Academies, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

**Time for briefing  
and introductions:  
5 minutes**

This is a **voluntary focus group**. The Academy staff member who invited you to participate in this session should have informed you that we would be discussing gender-related issues, including sexual assault and harassment, and asked if you were willing to participate. If you prefer not to sit in on this focus group, you are free to leave or to sit quietly while others participate.

I have provided each of you with a handout. Please turn to page 1. You can follow along while I share with you the purpose for this focus group and the ground rules we will follow.

- Let's begin by talking about why we are doing the focus group. While the press and others may claim to know what is going on at the Academies, members of Congress and your senior leaders want to hear directly from you about the issues that affect you. Congress directed the Secretary of Defense to conduct an annual assessment cycle of surveys and focus groups in alternating years on gender issues at each of the Academies. This is an opportunity for you to share your perceptions and recommendations directly with senior leaders.
- Focus group participants sometimes say "I have not experienced any of these behaviors, so why should I stay for this session?" The purpose of this focus group is to understand these issues at your Academy. You're the experts on what it's like to go to the Academies and we want to hear your opinion about Academy life. It doesn't matter if you *have* or *have not* had gender-related experiences. We do not want to discuss your personal experiences with sexual assault and sexual harassment. We do want to discuss issues in general so we can provide guidance to leadership to create the best environment possible for you.

I want to thank you in advance for participating in this important focus group and go over a few ground rules for the focus group:

- Please respect each others' opinions. We know you will have different perspectives on issues covered in this focus group. We want to hear those views—that's why we are here today. So there are no right or wrong statements or opinions.
- If you don't feel you have anything to contribute, there's no pressure for you to do so, and if you need to leave during the session, please do so in a quiet manner, so as not to disrupt the group.
- I will lead the discussion and \_\_\_\_\_ will be helping us to take notes. We will record comments but will not record names or other identifying information. Only an analysis and summary of the data will go in our report. If you would like to see how comments are being recorded, please examine what \_\_\_\_\_ is typing.
- This is a non-attribution session. Although we are taking notes on your comments and suggestions, we will not share anything outside this room that can be attributed to any one of you specifically. We ask your cooperation in protecting the privacy of the comments made within this session, so please do not discuss the focus group proceedings after you leave.
- Please keep the crosstalk to a minimum. Let me be the focal point for questions and discussion.
- Any questions?

On the next several pages of your handout are results from the 2012 survey that we will use as part of the discussion today. I will call your attention to the specific item as we reach that part of the discussion.

Please note that the results I will share with you come from the 2012 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey. This survey was conducted in the spring of 2012 with results reported to your Academy and Service leadership as well as the House and Senate Armed Services Committees in December 2012. Our report is available at the Web site shown if you are interested.

I have several questions to ask you today, with a few subtopics in each. I will watch the time so we will be able to cover all questions by the end of this session at [give specific end time].

Let's begin our discussion today with some results of the survey on sexual assault and sexual harassment. Please turn to page 3 of your handout. Here you will see some of the results from our 2012 survey that we will discuss today.

**Time for Question 1:  
15 minutes**

## **1. Perceptions about sexual assault and sexual harassment**

- a. Let's start the discussion by discussing the rates for unwanted sexual contact from the 2012 survey. [Ice breaker question] Do you recall taking the survey last spring?
  - i. For women, the rate here at the Military Academy was 10.7% in 2012. For men it was 1.7%. You can also see the rates in past survey years as well as the average rates at the DoD Academies. Do these

unwanted sexual contact rates seem right to you? Too high, too low? Please discuss.

- ii. Please note the description of sexual harassment and sexist behavior on page 4, then the rates on page 4 and 5. [Explain how sexual harassment is comprised of several types of behavior if they ask. And sexist behavior is based on gender, not sexual behaviors] For women, the sexual harassment rate here at the Military Academy was 49% in 2012. For men it was 8%. For women, the rate for sexist behavior was 91% in 2012. For men it was 33%. Do these rates seem right to you? Too high, too low? Please discuss.
- b. A finding from the survey suggests that people who experience unwanted sexual contact also tend to experience other unwanted behaviors, such as sexual harassment and sexist behavior. Take a look at the rates for sexual harassment on page 4. This is for all men and women at this Academy. If we look at the rates for sexual harassment of just those men and women who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year, the rates for sexual harassment are higher at 93% for women and approximately 63% for men. I say approximately for men because there are too few here at the Military Academy to estimate accurately, so we used an average across the DoD Academies to get 63%. Look also at the rates for sexist behavior on page 5. For those who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year, sexist behavior was also experienced by 99% of the women and approximately 76% of the men.
- i. What do you think about the relationship between sexual assault and sexual harassment? Sexist behavior?
  - ii. If someone gets away with sexual harassment or sexist comments, do you think they might move on to more serious behaviors like unwanted touching or sexual acts? Have you seen any examples of someone moving from one type of unwanted behavior to another?
  - iii. Do you sense attitudes of disrespect toward women at the Academy that might contribute to sexual assault or other unwanted gender-related behaviors? Are there any attitudes of disrespect toward men? Please describe. [Keep the discussion to gender issues if they start discussing racial, religious, political, or other groups.]
  - iv. What can/should the Academy do to address sexist behavior or sexual harassment? Do you sense that there is acceptance of some of these behaviors as being part of the military environment? [If students acknowledge that there is acceptance, probe further on who they sense that from. Ask if it is part of the Academy “culture” or “military culture.” Have them explain how they learned the “culture.”]

- c. Let's go back to the earlier discussion of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment rates for men from the survey. You indicated they are [higher or lower] than what you might have expected. Who would you think are typically offenders? Where would you think such incidents are most likely to occur?
- d. I would like to end this section by asking for your perceptions of the cause of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment behaviors at the Academy.
  - i. With all the emphasis on prevention, why do they still occur?
  - ii. Does pornography or sexting play a role?
  - iii. What more can be done to prevent unwanted sexual contact? Sexual harassment?

OK, now let's switch gears and talk about reporting unwanted sexual contact.

**Time for Question 2:  
10 minutes**

## **2. Reporting**

- a. Please go to the table on page 5 of your handout. Here at the Military Academy there were 12 unrestricted reports of unwanted sexual contact last year, 3 restricted reports, and 2 informal sexual harassment complaints filed. These represent only about one tenth [10.7% of 703 total women and 1.7% of 3,743 men = 75+64 = 139 potential reports] of the reports that could have been filed based on the survey results. Why do you think the majority of students who experienced unwanted sexual contact choose not to report the incident? Why did they choose not to report sexual harassment?
- b. What more can be done to encourage reporting? What barriers could be eliminated? Does the competitive nature of the Academy inhibit people from reporting?
- c. Many students who experience unwanted sexual contact say they did not report it but "Took care of it myself." What does that mean to you? What actions would one take?
- d. Do you think someone would be more or less inclined to report unwanted sexual contact that involved an offender of the same sex for example, male-on-male or female-on-female? Sexual harassment?

We have talked a while about unwanted sexual contact and reporting. Now I want to talk to you a little about the locations where it might occur.

**Time for Question 3:  
10 minutes**

### **3. Places where unwanted sexual contact is most likely to occur**

- a. Most victims of unwanted sexual contact indicated on the survey that the incident occurred on Academy grounds. Where would the most likely place be at this Academy for an incident to occur?
- b. How could these places be made safer?
- c. Are there other locations, such as field settings, sports team trips, club trips, on ship, or at another military location where students might be more vulnerable to unwanted sexual contact? Please describe.
- d. Are students on summer training programs away from campus more vulnerable? How could these places or experiences be made safer?

Let's turn our discussion specifically to multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact for a few minutes.

**Time for Question 4:  
10 minutes**

### **4. Multiple experiences of sexual assault**

- a. Survey results show that victims often experience more than one incident of unwanted sexual contact. Do you think behaviors tend to progress, such as experiences of touching first, followed by more aggressive behaviors?
- b. Do you think someone would be more inclined to report or seek help after experiencing one type of behaviors more than others? [If asked for clarification, ask if someone would be more likely to report completed sex versus attempted sex or touching?]
- c. If a victim were to experience multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact, do you think it would be more likely to be from the same offender/perpetrator or different ones? Do you think a perpetrator who assaults one person would also be likely to assault someone else?
- d. Is there a sense that perpetrators have a good chance of getting away with unwanted sexual contact, hence they repeat their actions? Are perpetrators getting away with these behaviors because victims do not report it or perpetrators are not charged and punished?

Let's discuss leadership's response to unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment for a moment.

**Time for Question 5:  
10 minutes**

### **5. Leadership Perceptions**

- a. What do your faculty, coaches/activity leaders, and military staff [such as TACs, senior NCOs] say to you about sexual assault and other unwanted behaviors? Can you give an example? [Depending on the response, ask if the discussions are helpful or what they would like their leaders to say to them.]

- b. How well do faculty/staff lead by example? Do they say something when they witness a questionable behavior? Do they help set a standard or give the impression that a certain amount of “locker room talk” is acceptable?  
[Depending on the responses, probe for good or bad examples.]
- c. Do you think it is the responsibility of faculty/staff to address these issues? Do you see them as roles models? Who specifically [positions, not names]?
- d. Has your TAC ever discussed unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment with you? What kind of information was discussed? Was it helpful? Why? What would you like to hear from them?
- e. What does senior leadership say about unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment? How do you think they handle reported cases of unwanted sexual contact? Do you think leadership would react differently to same-sex unwanted sexual contact? How does leadership respond to instances of sexual harassment? [Probe for good and bad examples, or instances where behaviors are tolerated or overlooked.]
- f. In the past few months, have you noticed any new emphasis on unwanted sexual contact or sexual harassment? What has been done? Do you think these steps will make a difference? Do you think there will be any unintended consequences [if asked for examples, ask if the message was negatively received or made them angry]?
- g. Do you know the SARC/victims’ advocate? Would you talk to them about an incident of unwanted sexual contact? Why or why not?

Now let's turn our attention briefly to the topic of training at your Academy.

Time for Question 6:  
10 minutes

## 6. Training

- a. What type of training have you received this year in the prevention and response to unwanted sexual contact? Sexual harassment?
- b. When do you receive this training? Is the timing and location convenient for you?
- c. Who typically conducts the training? Are they effective trainers?
- d. What training did you consider to be the most effective this year?
- e. Did you learn anything this past year that you did not know before? What? Is there something you would like to know more about?
- f. [Seniors only and the mixed junior/senior session] Do you feel prepared to deal with issues of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment among

your subordinates when you enter active duty? What training was the most helpful? What could be done better to prepare you?

I would like to wrap up our session today with a couple of final questions.

Time for Question 7:  
10 minutes

## **7. Additional recommendations for addressing unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment**

- a. Do you think the Academy should do more to make counseling or Sexual Assault Prevention and Response resources available to students who experienced trauma prior to entering the military?
- b. As future leaders of the military, what would you do now in your cadet role to address the problem of unwanted sexual contact? Sexual harassment?
- c. Do you believe it would be productive to have a Cadet "Dignity and Respect Code," much like the Honor Code, in order to instill these values in the cadet system?
- d. What else can you tell us about unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment at the Academy? What did we not ask that we should have?

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group. As I mentioned at the beginning, we will treat all of your comments anonymously. There is no attribution to any of you for the specific comments you made today. Please also respect that non-attribution when you leave here today. Our goal is to provide the best data possible and you have helped us greatly today with your comments and insights.

One last comment – on the last page of the handout you will see a list of resources available to you if you would like to follow up with us or have any questions. It also lists Academy resources if you would like to talk further to someone about this study or any experiences you might have had with unwanted gender-related behaviors.

Thank you again for your participation.



**Appendix B.  
USMA Cadet Handout**



**2013 Service Academy  
Gender Relations Focus  
Group  
U.S. Military Academy**

**Handout for Cadet  
Participants**

## ***Purpose***

We have asked you to be here with us to help us investigate issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response. You might recall that in the spring of last year students at your Academy were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey on these topics. This year, a series of focus groups are being conducted to provide additional information to DoD and Academy leadership. Similar focus groups are being conducted at all three DoD Service Academies as well as the U.S. Coast Guard Academy and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

This is a voluntary focus group. The Academy staff member who invited you to participate in this session should have informed you that we would be discussing gender-related issues, including sexual assault and harassment, and asked if you were willing to participate. If you prefer not to sit in on this focus group, you are free to leave or to sit quietly while others participate.

- Let's begin by talking about why we are doing the focus group. While the press and others may claim to know what is going on at the Academies, members of Congress and your senior leaders want to hear directly from you about the issues that affect you. Congress directed the Secretary of Defense to conduct an annual assessment cycle of surveys and focus groups in alternating years on gender issues at each of the Academies. This is an opportunity for you to share your perceptions and recommendations directly with senior leaders.
- Focus group participants sometimes say "I have not experienced any of these behaviors, so why should I stay for this session?" The purpose of this focus group is to understand these issues at your Academy. You're the experts on what it's like to go to the Academies and we want to hear your opinion about Academy life. It doesn't matter if you have or have not had gender-related experiences. We do not want to discuss your personal experiences with sexual assault and sexual harassment. We do want to discuss issues in general so we can provide guidance to leadership to create the best environment possible for you.

### ***Ground Rules for Discussion***

Thank you in advance for participating in this important focus group. We will follow a few ground rules for the focus group:

- Please respect each other's opinions. We know you will have different perspectives on issues covered in this focus group. We want to hear those views—that's why we are here today. So there are no right or wrong statements or opinions.
- If you don't feel you have anything to contribute, there's no pressure for you to do so, and if you need to leave during the session, please do so in a quiet manner, so as not to disrupt the group.
- I will lead the discussion and our recorder will be helping us to take notes. We will record comments but will not record names or other identifying information. Only an analysis and summary of the data will go in our report. If you would like to see how comments are being recorded, please examine what is being typed.
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- Please keep the crosstalk to a minimum. Let me be the focal point for questions and discussion.
- Any questions?

### ***Discussion Resources***

On the next several pages are results from the 2012 survey that we will use as part of the discussion today. I will call your attention to the specific item as we reach that part of the discussion.

Please note that the results I will share with you come from the 2012 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey. This survey was conducted in the spring of 2012 with results reported to your Academy and Service leadership as well as the House and Senate Armed Services Committees in December 2012.

To assure statistically reliability of the survey results, we surveyed all of the female cadets and a sample of approximately one-third of male cadets. The full report is available on the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPRO) Web site at:

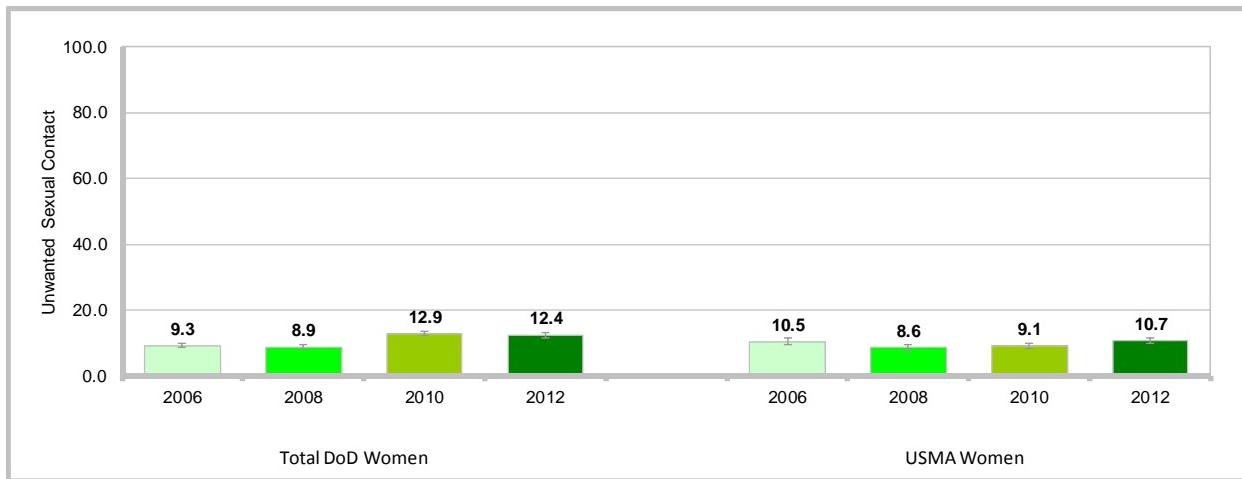
[http://www.sapr.mil/media/pdf/reports/FINAL\\_APY\\_11-12\\_MSA\\_Report.pdf](http://www.sapr.mil/media/pdf/reports/FINAL_APY_11-12_MSA_Report.pdf)



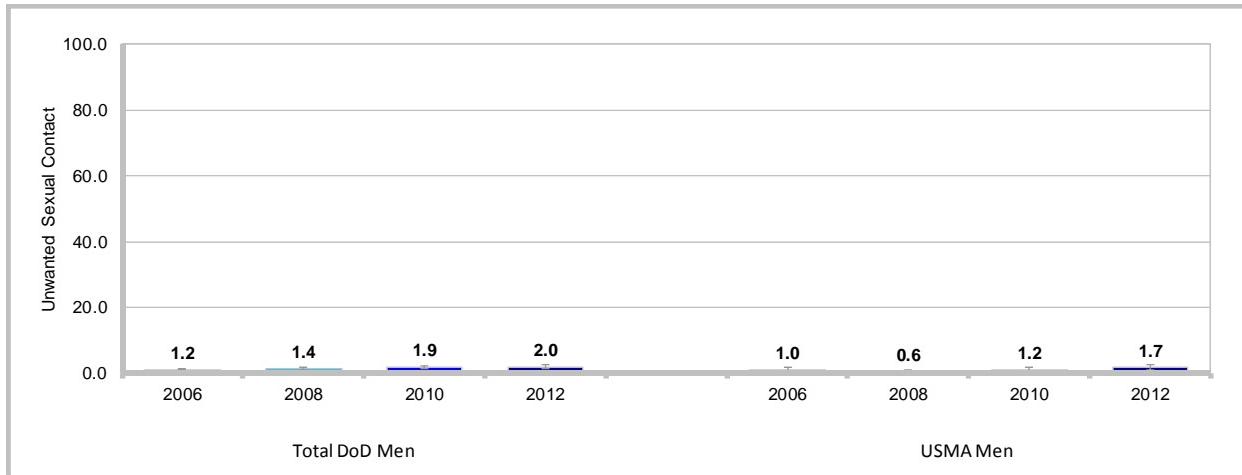
## Unwanted Sexual Contact

Unwanted sexual contact consists of a range of unwanted behaviors including unwanted sexual touching, attempted sex, and completed sex.

### 1. Unwanted Sexual Contact Rates for Women



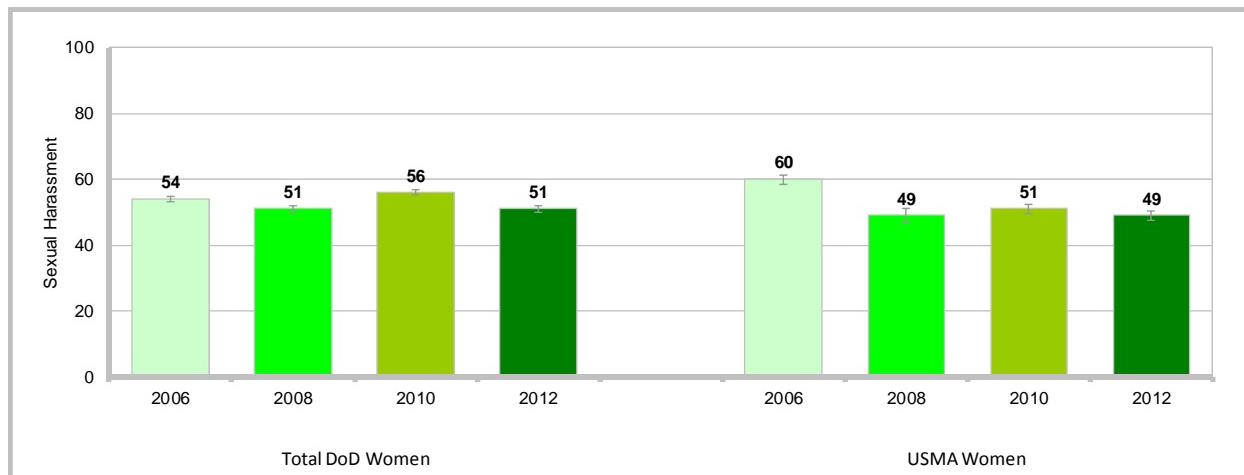
### 2. Unwanted Sexual Contact Rates for Men



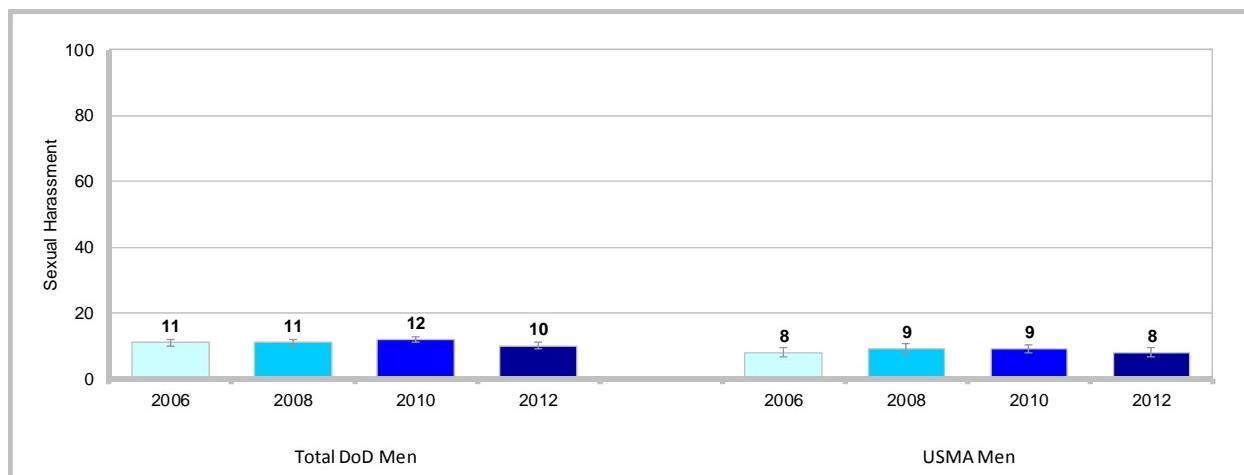
## Sexual Harassment and Sexist Behavior

- **Sexual harassment**
  - Crude/Offensive Behavior – verbal/nonverbal behaviors of a sexual nature that were offensive or embarrassing
  - Unwanted Sexual Attention – unwanted attempts to establish a sexual relationship
  - Sexual Coercion – classic *quid pro quo* instances of special treatment or favoritism conditioned on sexual cooperation
  - One “labeling” item that asks if the student considers any of the selected behaviors to be sexual harassment
- **Sexist behavior**
  - Verbal/nonverbal behaviors that convey insulting, offensive, and/or condescending attitudes based on one’s gender

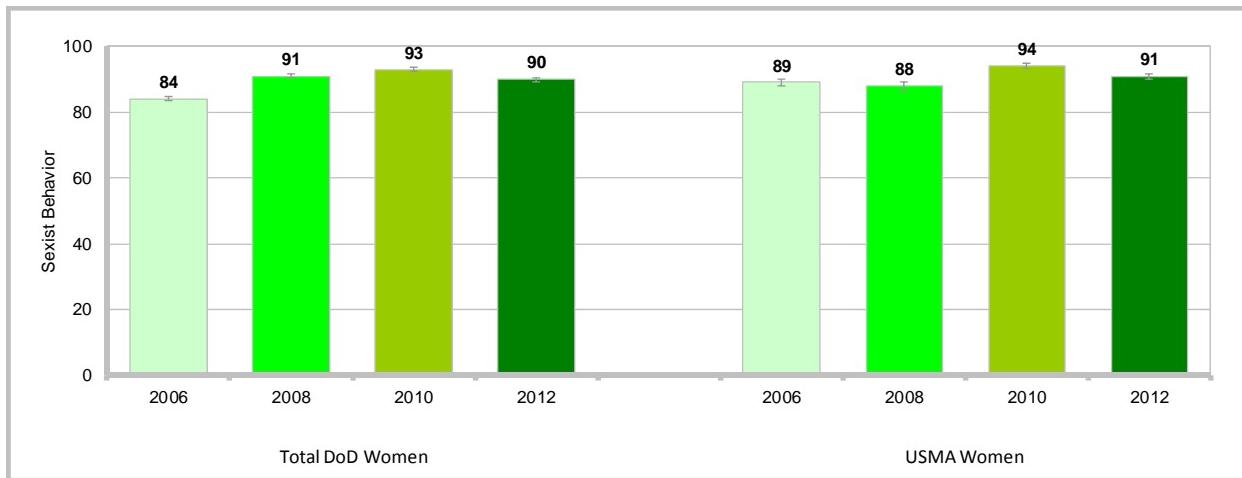
### 3. Sexual Harassment Rates for Women



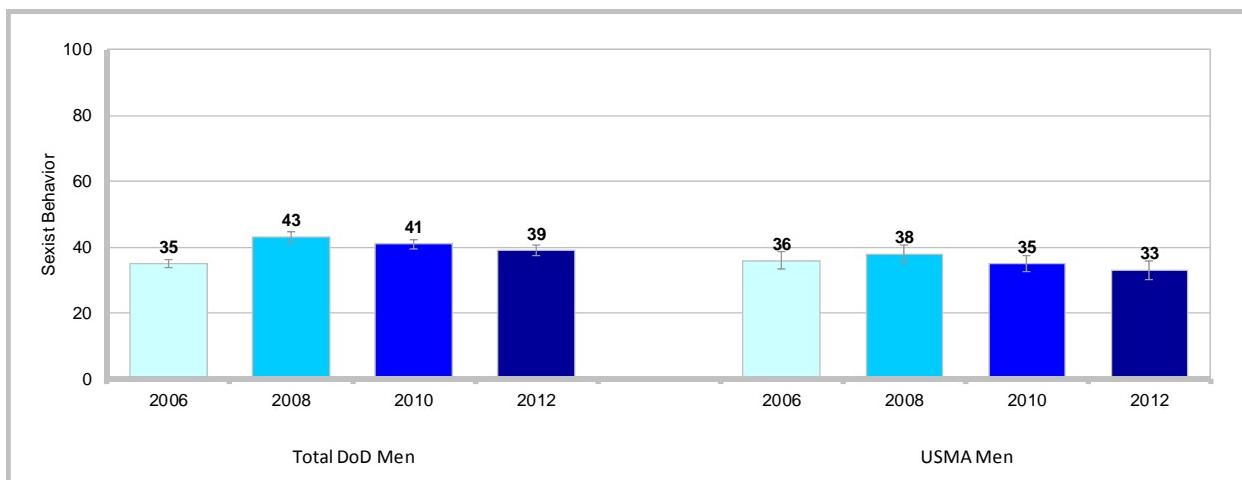
### 4. Sexual Harassment Rates for Men



## 5. Sexist Behavior Rates for Women



## 6. Sexist Behavior Rates for Men



## 7. Number of incidents reported in the past year

Type of Report	Number of Reports
Sexual Assault – Unrestricted	12
Sexual Assault – Restricted	3
Sexual Harassment – Formal Complaints	2



We appreciate your participation in this focus group. In the event you would like to discuss issues related to the focus group with someone from DMDC during (or after) our visit to the U.S. Military Academy, please contact Ms. Kristin Williams at 571-372-1033 or DSN 372-1033.

If you wish to provide feedback regarding the focus group process or the focus group content, please send us an e-mail at: SA-Survey@mail.mil. If you know of others who might like to contact a member of the DMDC team, please share this information with them. You may also use the Department of Defense SAFE Hotline at 877-995-5247 to report abuse of authority, mismanagement, fraud, and waste.

In April 2011, the Department of Defense launched the DoD Safe Helpline to provide confidential, live, one-on-one expert advice to victims of sexual assault. Available 24/7, users can click, call or text to access Safe Helpline services:

- CLICK: Logging on to [www.SafeHelpline.org](http://www.SafeHelpline.org) allows users to receive live, one-on-one confidential help with a trained professional through a secure instant-messaging format. The website also provides vital information about recovering from and reporting sexual assault.
- CALL: Calling the telephone hotline 877-995-5247 allows users to speak with trained Safe Helpline staff for personalized advice and support. Safe Helpline staff can also transfer callers to installation or base Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs)/On-call SAPR Victim Advocates (VAs), civilian rape crisis centers or the Suicide Prevention Lifeline.
- TEXT: Texting their location to 55-247 (inside the U.S.) or 202-470-5546 (outside the U.S.) allows users to receive automated contact information for the SARC at their installation or base.

If you feel uncomfortable or uneasy after participating in the focus group, and/or if you are a survivor of sexual assault, or have experienced sexual harassment or stalking, we strongly encourage you to Contact the Sexual Assault Response Team:

**USCC Sexual Assault Response Coordinator**  
845-938-7479; 24/7 cell 845-401-3476

**Center for Personal Development (CPD)**  
845-938-3022; 24/7 cell 845-591-7215

**Military Police Desk**  
845-938-3333

**West Point Duty Chaplain**  
845-401-8171

**Garrison Sexual Assault Response Coordinator**  
845-938-3369; 24/7 cell 914-382-8041

**Installation Victim Advocate**  
845-938-5657; 24/7 cell 914-382-8180

**West Point Diversity Officer**  
845-938-0508; 24/7 cell 845-590-1249

**Medical Attention**  
**Keller Army Community Hospital**  
**Emergency Room: 845-938-4004**  
**Behavioral Health: 845-938-3441**

**Appendix C.**

**USMA Faculty, Athletic Staff, and Military  
Cadre Focus Group Guide**



## 2013 Faculty/Activity/Military Focus Group Guide

### Introduction to the Faculty/Activity/Military Focus Group

Good morning/afternoon. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am with the Defense Manpower Data Center. My colleagues with me this morning/afternoon are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ also with DMDC. We have asked you to be here with us to help us investigate issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response. You might recall that last year students at your Academy were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey on these topics. This year, as was done two years ago, a series of focus groups are being conducted to provide information to DoD and Academy leadership. This year is the first year we have invited members of the faculty, athletic and activity staffs, and military cadre to participate. Similar focus groups are being conducted at all three DoD Service Academies, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

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5 minutes**

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- Let's begin by talking about why we are doing the focus group. Congress directed the Secretary of Defense to conduct an annual assessment cycle of surveys and focus groups in alternating years on gender issues at each of the Academies. This is an opportunity for you and students to share your perceptions and recommendations directly with senior leaders.
- This is the first year we have invited members of the faculty, athletic and activity staffs, and military cadre to participate. Because you interact with the students, we believe you are in a position to share valuable insights with us on these important issues. We do not want to discuss any specific cases of sexual assault or sexual harassment. We do want to discuss issues in general so we can provide guidance to leadership to create the best environment possible for you.

I want to thank you in advance for participating in this important focus group and go over a few ground rules for the focus group:

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- Any questions?

On the next several pages of your handout are results from the 2012 survey that we will use as part of the discussion today. I will call your attention to the specific item as we reach that part of the discussion.

Please note that the results I will share with you come from the 2012 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey. This survey was conducted in the spring of 2012 with results reported to your Academy and Service leadership as well as the House and Senate Armed Services Committees in December 2012. Our report is available at the Web site shown if you are interested.

I have several questions to ask you today, with a few subtopics in each. I will watch the time so we will be able to cover all questions by the end of this session at [give specific end time].

Let's begin our discussion today with some results of the survey on sexual assault and sexual harassment. Please turn to page 3 of your handout. Here you will see some of the results from our 2012 survey that we will discuss today.

**Time for Question 1:  
15 minutes**

## **1. Perceptions about unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment**

- a. Let's start the discussion by discussing the rates for unwanted sexual contact from the 2012 survey. [Ice breaker question] Are you familiar with these findings?
  - i. For women, the rate here at the Military Academy was 10.7% in 2012. For men it was 1.7%. You can also see the rates in past survey years as well as the average rates at the DoD Academies. Do these rates seem right to you based on your knowledge about the cadet/midshipman corps/wing/brigade? Too high, too low? Please discuss.

- ii. Please note the description of sexual harassment and sexist behavior on page 4, then the rates on page 4 and 5. [Explain how sexual harassment is comprised of several types of behavior if they ask. And sexist behavior is based on gender, not sexual behaviors] For women, the sexual harassment rate here at the Military Academy was 49% in 2012. For men it was 8%. For women, the rate for sexist behavior was 91% in 2012. For men it was 33%. Do these rates seem right to you? Too high, too low? Please discuss.
- b. A finding from the survey suggests that people who experience unwanted sexual contact also tend to experience other unwanted behaviors, such as sexual harassment and sexist behavior. Take a look at the rates for sexual harassment on page 4. This is for all male and female cadets at this Academy. If we look at the rates for sexual harassment of just those men and women who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year, the rates for sexual harassment are higher at 93% for women and approximately 63% for men. I say approximately for men because there are too few here at the Military Academy to estimate accurately, so we used an average across the DoD Academies to get 63%. Look also at the rates for sexist behavior on page 5. For those who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year, sexist behavior was also experienced by 99% of the women and approximately 76% of the men.
- i. What do you think about the relationship between unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment? Sexist behavior?
  - ii. If someone gets away with sexual harassment or sexist comments, do you think they might move on to more serious behaviors like unwanted touching or sexual acts? Have you seen any examples of someone moving from one type of unwanted behavior to another?
  - iii. Do you think a student who had a previous experience of unwanted sexual contact, before entering the Academy or in previous years at the Academy, is someone more vulnerable for future assaults? How? How do you think they might feel about getting help? How would you advertise help for people with such a background? Is there anything that could be done to help people avoid the “spotlight” if they seek assistance?
  - iv. Do you sense attitudes of disrespect toward women at the Academy that might contribute to unwanted sexual contact or other unwanted gender-related behaviors? Are there any attitudes of disrespect toward men? Please describe. [Keep the discussion to gender issues if they start discussing racial, religious, political, or other groups.]
  - v. What can/should the Academy do to address sexist behavior or sexual harassment? Do you sense that students accept some of these

behaviors as being part of the military environment? [If participants acknowledge that there is acceptance, probe further on where students get that perception. Ask if it is part of the Academy “culture” or “military culture.” Have them explain how they define the “culture.”]

- c. Let's go back to the earlier discussion of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment rates for men from the survey. You indicated they are [higher or lower] than what you might have expected. Who would you think are typically offenders? Where would you think such incidents are most likely to occur?
- d. I would like to end this section by asking your perceptions of the cause of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment behaviors at the Academy?
  - i. With all the emphasis on prevention, why do they still occur?
  - ii. Does pornography or sexting play a role?
  - iii. What more can be done to prevent unwanted sexual contact? Sexual harassment?

OK, now let's switch gears and talk about roles and responsibilities with regard to unwanted sexual contact.

**Time for Question 2:  
10 minutes**

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

- a. What do you see as your role in helping reduce unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment? Do you discuss unwanted sexual contact prevention and response with your students? Do you discuss issues about sexual harassment with them?
- b. What resources and training do you receive to prepare you to discuss unwanted behaviors with students and to advise them when an incident occurs? What has worked well? What has not worked well? What training or resources would be helpful to you?
- c. Are you aware of instances where one of your students has experienced unwanted sexual contact or sexual harassment? [Do not discuss cases by name.] What would you do if a student came to you for advice about an incident of unwanted sexual contact they or a friend experienced?
- d. Has Academy senior leadership engaged you in discussions of unwanted sexual contact prevention and response? If yes, how so? If not, what information would you find useful to have?
- e. Is there anything that prevents you from being more effective in supporting messages about unwanted sexual contact prevention to the students?
- f. What is your opinion of how unwanted sexual contact cases are handled?

- g. Do you think leadership would react differently to same-sex unwanted sexual contact?

I would like to ask several questions now about the locations where unwanted sexual contact might occur.

Time for Question 3:  
10 minutes

**3. Places where unwanted sexual contact is most likely to occur**

- a. Most victims of unwanted sexual contact indicated on the survey that the incident occurred on Academy grounds. Where would the most likely place be at this Academy for an incident to occur?
- b. How could these places be made safer?
- c. Are there other locations, such as field settings, sports team trips, club trips, on ship, or at another military location where students might be more vulnerable to unwanted sexual contact? Please describe.
- d. Are students on summer training programs away from campus more vulnerable? How could these places or experiences be made safer?

Let's turn our discussion specifically to multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact for a few minutes.

Time for Question 4:  
10 minutes

**4. Multiple experiences of unwanted sexual contact**

- a. Survey results show that victims often experience more than one incident of unwanted sexual contact. Do you think behaviors tend to progress, such as experiences of touching first, followed by more aggressive behaviors?
- b. Do you think someone would be more inclined to report or seek help after experiencing one type of behaviors more than others? [If asked for clarification, ask if someone would be more likely to report completed sex versus attempted sex or touching?]
- c. If a victim were to experience multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact, do you think it would be more likely to be from the same offender/perpetrator or different ones? Do you think a perpetrator who assaults one person would also be likely to assault someone else?
- d. Is there a sense that perpetrators have a good chance of getting away with unwanted sexual contact, hence they repeat their actions? Are perpetrators getting away with these behaviors because victims do not report it or perpetrators are not charged and punished?

Let's discuss briefly the phenomenon of victim blaming.

Time for Question 5:  
5 minutes

## **5. Victim Blaming**

- a. It is not uncommon for people to blame a victim for an incident of unwanted sexual contact saying things like "she led him on" or "she was trying to avoid getting into trouble herself for an offense, like underage drinking."
- b. Do you ever hear those comments? How do you react to such comments?
- c. Do you hear the same kind of "victim blaming" comments when the victim is a male? If not, why do you suppose there is a difference?"
- d. What can be done to address victim blaming?

Now let's discuss interactions with the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response staff here at the Academy.

**Time for Question 6:  
5 minutes**

## **6. Interactions with SAPR Staff**

- a. Do you interact with the professional unwanted sexual contact or sexual harassment staff? What is the nature of the interaction?
- b. What is your opinion about the programs for prevention and response?
- c. What is your opinion of the training the students receive in sexual harassment and unwanted sexual contact prevention and response? What do they tell you about the training? Is it effective? How could it be improved?
- d. What would work better to reach students and help them take the training seriously? Do you see instances where cadet leaders deal effectively with inappropriate behaviors based on the training they received?
- e. Do you think the training adequately prepares the students to respond to an unwanted sexual contact once they graduate? How could it be improved?

I want to ask you a couple of quick questions about potential cultural change.

**Time for Question 7:  
10 minutes**

## **7. Cultural Change**

- a. One way some people believe the Academy can improve unwanted sexual contact prevention and response is to change the culture and attitudes toward this issue. Do you agree? Please provide some examples of areas where change is needed.
- b. How can such a cultural change be made at this Academy? What elements need to be addressed?
- c. How does the Academy secure buy-in for change from the students? From leadership, faculty, and staff?

- d. Who should lead a cultural change? How would they do so?
- e. Do you think students treat each other with dignity and respect? What does it take to reach students about the importance of civility and proper behavior toward each other? Are these potential areas for cultural or attitudinal change?
- f. Are students prepared to lead other students with regard to preventing and responding to unwanted behaviors? Do they take that responsibility seriously?
- g. Do you believe it would be productive to have a Cadet "Dignity and Respect Code" much like the Honor Code, in order to instill these values in the cadet system?
- h. As preparation for future leadership positions, should issues such as proper behavior, unwanted sexual contact/harassment prevention, and response to unwanted sexual contact/harassment be made into graded coursework to ensure students take it seriously? Would that enhance accountability?
- i. Does the highly competitive nature of the Academy affect how students treat each other with respect to unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment? How does the competitive nature affect reporting of inappropriate behaviors?

Now I want to ask you a couple of quick questions about recent changes here at the Academy.

**Time for Question 8:  
5 minutes**

## **8. Recent Changes**

- a. Are you aware of any changes the Academy has implemented recently to address unwanted sexual contact or sexual harassment [such as tighter dormitory patrols]? Please describe.
- b. Are these changes effective? Did they go far enough? What else could be done?
- c. Is there a point where such actions become counter-productive [unintended consequences]?
- d. Have you seen changes in students over the years in terms of behaviors, attitudes, moral standards, and competitiveness? How do such changes relate to unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment behaviors?

I would like to wrap up our session today with a couple of final questions.

Time for Question 9:  
5 minutes

**9. Additional recommendations for addressing unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment**

- a. Do you think the Academy should do more to make counseling or Sexual Assault Prevention and Response resources available to students who experienced trauma prior to entering the military?
- b. What else can you tell us about unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment at the Academy? What did we not ask that we should have?

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group. As I mentioned at the beginning, we will treat all of your comments anonymously. There is no attribution to any of you for the specific comments you made today. Please also respect that non-attribution when you leave here today. Our goal is to provide the best data possible and you have helped us greatly today with your comments and insights.

One last comment – on the last page of the handout you will see a list of resources available to you if you would like to follow up with us or have any questions. It also lists Academy resources if you know of a student who would like to talk to someone about any experiences they might have had with unwanted gender-related behaviors.

Thank you again for your participation.

**Appendix D.**

**USMA Faculty, Athletic Staff, and Military Cadre Handout**



**2013 Service Academy  
Gender Relations Focus  
Group  
U.S. Military Academy**

**Handout for Faculty, Athletic  
Staff, Military Cadre  
Participants**

## ***Purpose***

We have asked you to be here with us to help us investigate issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response. You might recall that last year students at your Academy were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey on these topics. This year, as was done two years ago, a series of focus groups are being conducted to provide information to DoD and Academy leadership. This year is the first year we have invited members of the faculty, athletic and activity staffs, and military cadre to participate. Similar focus groups are being conducted at all three Service Academies. Focus groups will also be done at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy and U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

This is a voluntary focus group. The Academy staff member who invited you to participate in this session should have informed you that we would be discussing gender-related issues, including sexual assault and harassment, and asked if you were willing to participate. If you prefer not to sit in on this focus group, you are free to leave or to sit quietly while others participate.

- Let's begin by talking about why we are doing the focus group. Congress directed the Secretary of Defense to conduct an annual assessment cycle of surveys and focus groups in alternating years on gender issues at each of the Academies. This is an opportunity for you and students to share your perceptions and recommendations directly with senior leaders.
- This is the first year we have invited members of the faculty, athletic and activity staffs, and military cadre to participate. Because you interact with the students, we believe you are in a position to share valuable insights with us on these important issues. We do not want to discuss any specific cases of sexual assault or sexual harassment. We do want to discuss issues in general so we can provide guidance to leadership to create the best environment possible for you.

### ***Ground Rules for Discussion***

Thank you in advance for participating in this important focus group. We will follow a few ground rules for the focus group:

- Please respect each other's opinions. We know you will have different perspectives on issues covered in this focus group. We want to hear those views—that's why we are here today. So there are no right or wrong statements or opinions.
- If you don't feel you have anything to contribute, there's no pressure for you to do so, and if you need to leave during the session, please do so in a quiet manner, so as not to disrupt the group.
- I will lead the discussion and our recorder will be helping us to take notes. We will record comments but will not record names or other identifying information. Only an analysis and summary of the data will go in our report. If you would like to see how comments are being recorded, please examine what is being typed.
- This is a non-attribution session. Although we are taking notes on your comments and suggestions, we will not share anything outside this room that can be attributed to any one of you specifically. We ask your cooperation in protecting the privacy of the comments made within this session, so please do not discuss the focus group proceedings after you leave.
- Please keep the crosstalk to a minimum. Let me be the focal point for questions and discussion.
- Any questions?

### ***Discussion Resources***

On the next several pages are results from the 2012 survey that we will use as part of the discussion today. I will call your attention to the specific item as we reach that part of the discussion.

Please note that the results I will share with you come from the 2012 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey. This survey was conducted in the spring of 2012 with results reported to your Academy and Service leadership as well as the House and Senate Armed Services Committees in December 2012.

To assure statistically reliability of the survey results, we surveyed all of the female cadets and a sample of approximately one-third of male cadets. The full report is available on the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPRO) Web site at:

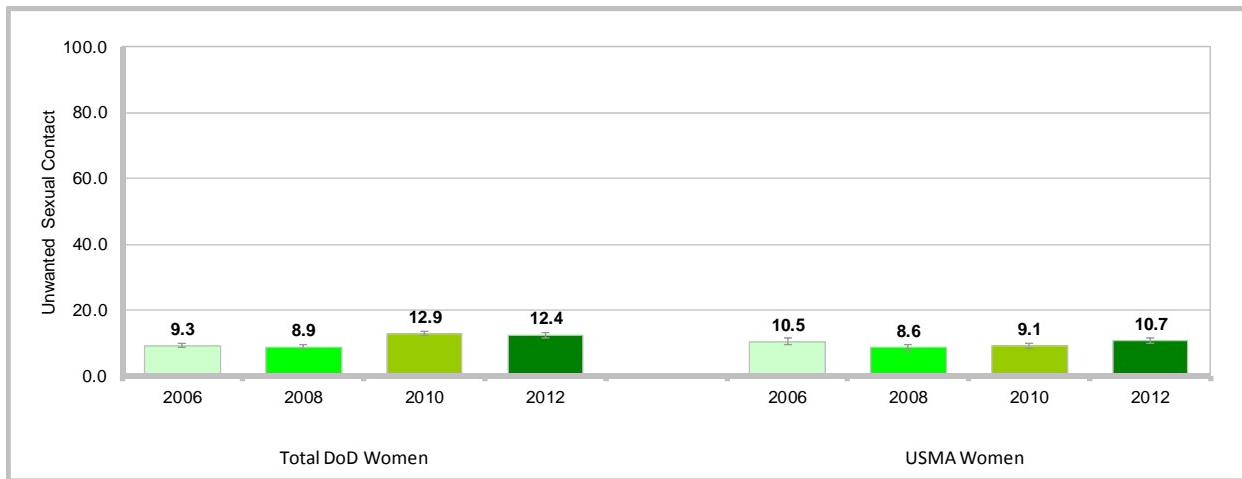
[http://www.sapr.mil/media/pdf/reports/FINAL\\_APY\\_11-12\\_MSA\\_Report.pdf](http://www.sapr.mil/media/pdf/reports/FINAL_APY_11-12_MSA_Report.pdf)



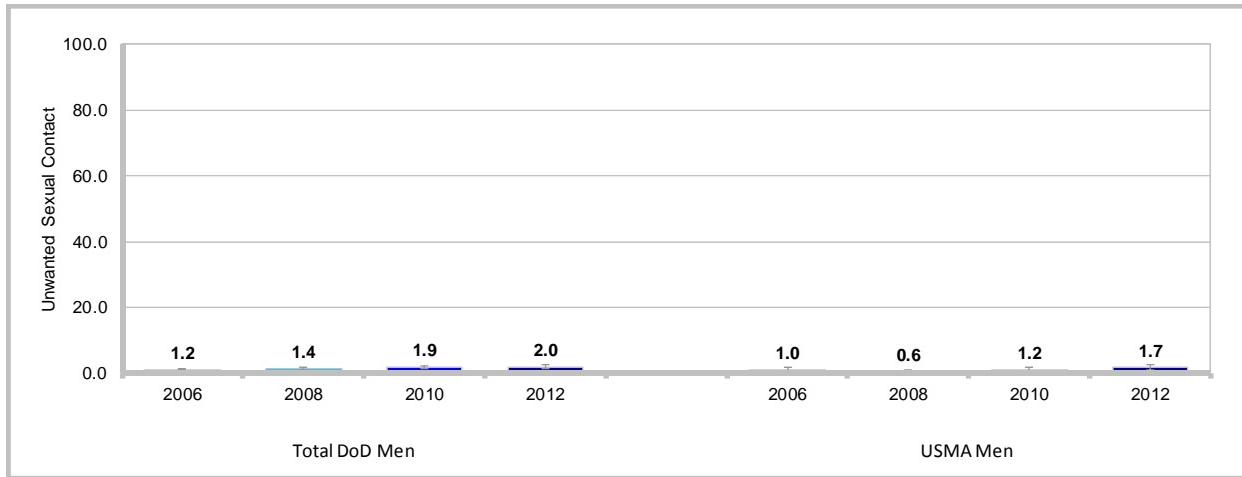
## Unwanted Sexual Contact

Unwanted sexual contact consists of a range of unwanted behaviors including unwanted sexual touching, attempted sex, and completed sex.

### 1. Unwanted Sexual Contact Rates for Women



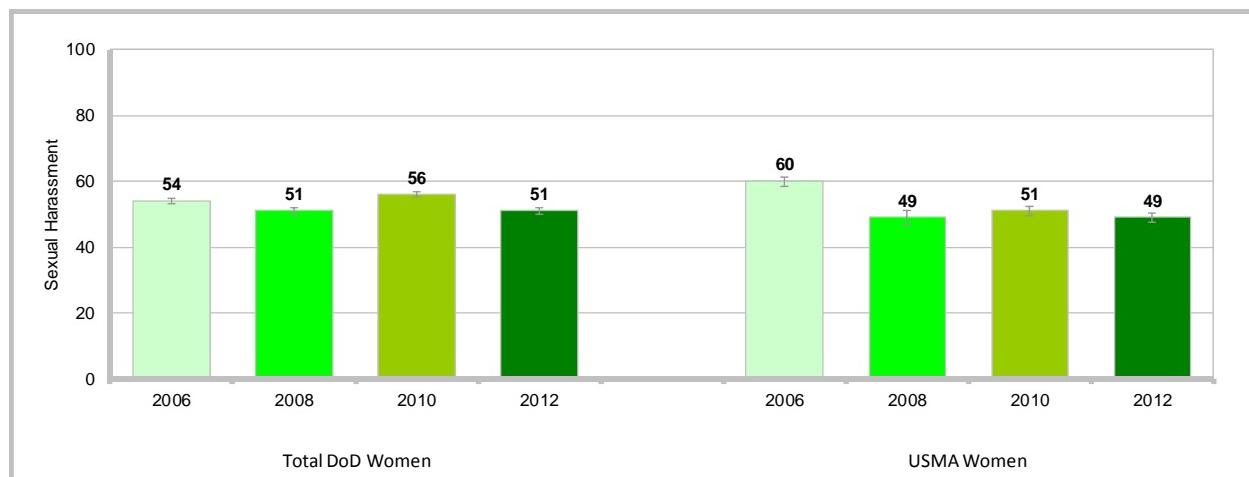
### 2. Unwanted Sexual Contact Rates for Men



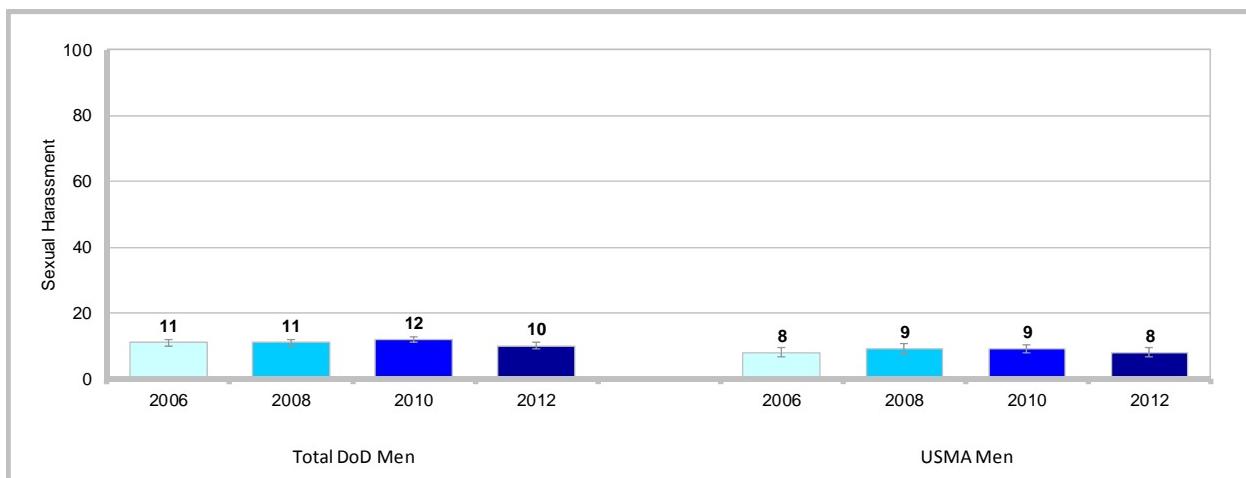
## Sexual Harassment and Sexist Behavior

- **Sexual harassment**
  - Crude/Offensive Behavior – verbal/nonverbal behaviors of a sexual nature that were offensive or embarrassing
  - Unwanted Sexual Attention – unwanted attempts to establish a sexual relationship
  - Sexual Coercion – classic *quid pro quo* instances of special treatment or favoritism conditioned on sexual cooperation
  - One “labeling” item that asks if the student considers any of the selected behaviors to be sexual harassment
- **Sexist behavior**
  - Verbal/nonverbal behaviors that convey insulting, offensive, and/or condescending attitudes based on one’s gender

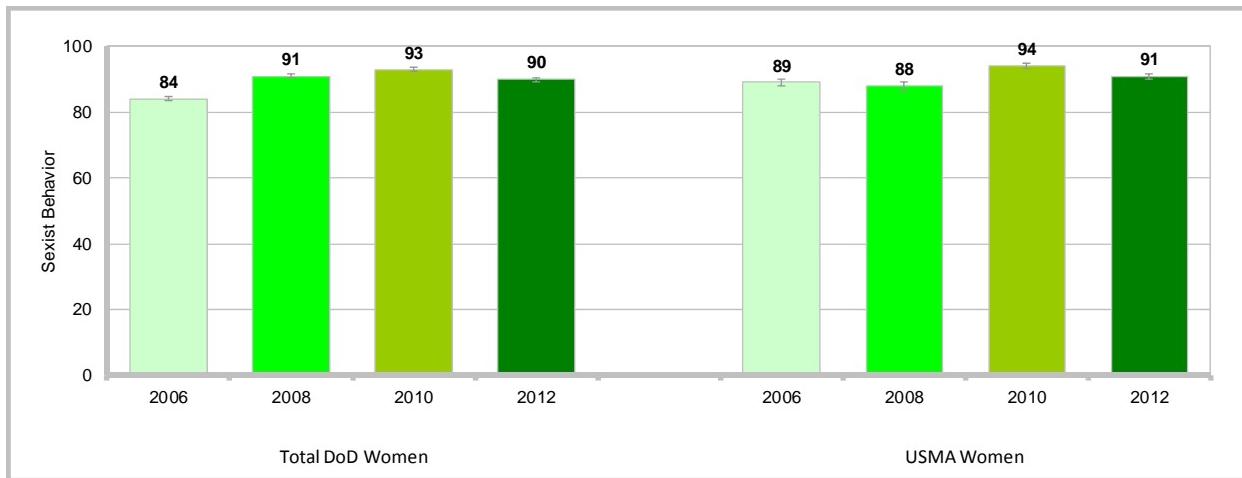
### 3. Sexual Harassment Rates for Women



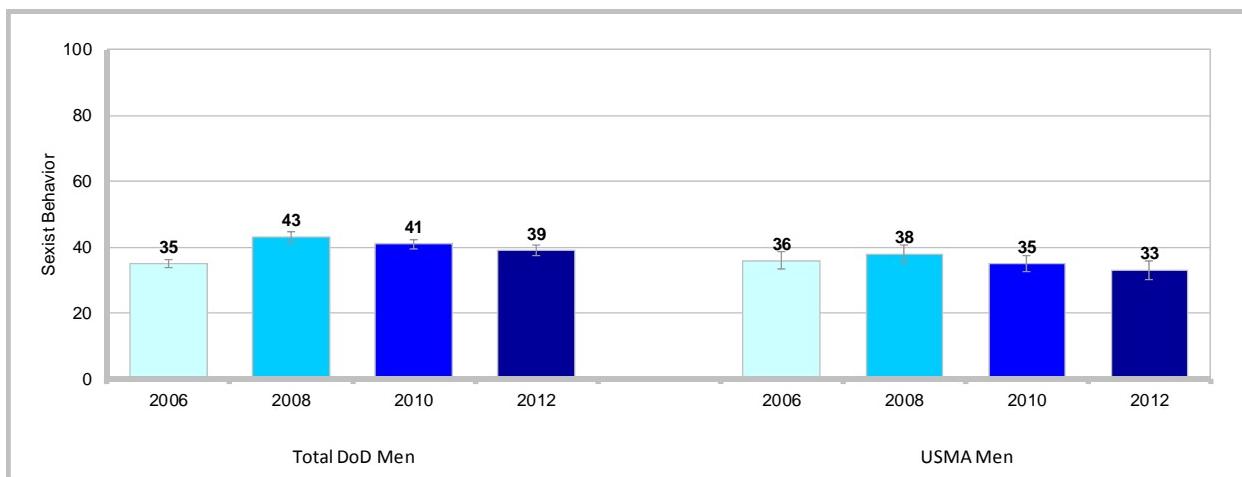
### 4. Sexual Harassment Rates for Men



## 5. Sexist Behavior Rates for Women



## 6. Sexist Behavior Rates for Men



## 7. Number of incidents reported in the past year

Type of Report	Number of Reports
Sexual Assault – Unrestricted	12
Sexual Assault – Restricted	3
Sexual Harassment – Formal Complaints	2



We appreciate your participation in this focus group. In the event you would like to discuss issues related to the focus group with someone from DMDC during (or after) our visit to the U.S. Military Academy, please contact Ms. Kristin Williams at 571-372-1033 or DSN 372-1033.

If you wish to provide feedback regarding the focus group process or the focus group content, please send us an e-mail at: SA-Survey@mail.mil. If you know of others who might like to contact a member of the DMDC team, please share this information with them. You may also use the Department of Defense SAFE Hotline at 877-995-5247 to report abuse of authority, mismanagement, fraud, and waste.

In April 2011, the Department of Defense launched the DoD Safe Helpline to provide confidential, live, one-on-one expert advice to victims of sexual assault. Available 24/7, users can click, call or text to access Safe Helpline services:

- CLICK: Logging on to [www.SafeHelpline.org](http://www.SafeHelpline.org) allows users to receive live, one-on-one confidential help with a trained professional through a secure instant-messaging format. The website also provides vital information about recovering from and reporting sexual assault.
- CALL: Calling the telephone hotline 877-995-5247 allows users to speak with trained Safe Helpline staff for personalized advice and support. Safe Helpline staff can also transfer callers to installation or base Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs)/On-call SAPR Victim Advocates (VAs), civilian rape crisis centers or the Suicide Prevention Lifeline.
- TEXT: Texting their location to 55-247 (inside the U.S.) or 202-470-5546 (outside the U.S.) allows users to receive automated contact information for the SARC at their installation or base.

If you feel uncomfortable or uneasy after participating in the focus group, and/or if you are a survivor of sexual assault, or have experienced sexual harassment or stalking, we strongly encourage you to Contact the Sexual Assault Response Team:

**USCC Sexual Assault Response Coordinator**  
845-938-7479; 24/7 cell 845-401-3476

**Center for Personal Development (CPD)**  
845-938-3022; 24/7 cell 845-591-7215

**Military Police Desk**  
845-938-3333

**West Point Duty Chaplain**  
845-401-8171

**Garrison Sexual Assault Response Coordinator**  
845-938-3369; 24/7 cell 914-382-8041

**Installation Victim Advocate**  
845-938-5657; 24/7 cell 914-382-8180

**West Point Diversity Officer**  
845-938-0508; 24/7 cell 845-590-1249

**Medical Attention**  
**Keller Army Community Hospital**  
**Emergency Room: 845-938-4004**  
**Behavioral Health: 845-938-3441**

**Appendix E.**

**USNA Midshipmen Focus Group Guide**



## 2013 Student Focus Group Guide

### Introduction to the Focus Group

Good morning/afternoon. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am with the Defense Manpower Data Center. My colleagues with me this morning/afternoon are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ also with DMDC. We have asked you to be here with us to help us investigate issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response. You might recall that last year students at your Academy were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey on these topics. This year, as was done two years ago, a series of focus groups are being conducted to provide information to DoD and Academy leadership. Similar focus groups are being conducted at all three DoD Service Academies, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

**Time for briefing  
and introductions:  
5 minutes**

This is a **voluntary focus group**. The Academy staff member who invited you to participate in this session should have informed you that we would be discussing gender-related issues, including sexual assault and harassment, and asked if you were willing to participate. If you prefer not to sit in on this focus group, you are free to leave or to sit quietly while others participate.

I have provided each of you with a handout. Please turn to page 1. You can follow along while I share with you the purpose for this focus group and the ground rules we will follow.

- Let's begin by talking about why we are doing the focus group. While the press and others may claim to know what is going on at the Academies, members of Congress and your senior leaders want to hear directly from you about the issues that affect you. Congress directed the Secretary of Defense to conduct an annual assessment cycle of surveys and focus groups in alternating years on gender issues at each of the Academies. This is an opportunity for you to share your perceptions and recommendations directly with senior leaders.
- Focus group participants sometimes say "I have not experienced any of these behaviors, so why should I stay for this session?" The purpose of this focus group is to understand these issues at your Academy. You're the experts on what it's like to go to the Academies and we want to hear your opinion about Academy life. It doesn't matter if you *have* or *have not* had gender-related experiences. We do not want to discuss your personal experiences with sexual assault and sexual harassment. We do want to discuss issues in general so we can provide guidance to leadership to create the best environment possible for you.

I want to thank you in advance for participating in this important focus group and go over a few ground rules for the focus group:

- Please respect each others' opinions. We know you will have different perspectives on issues covered in this focus group. We want to hear those views—that's why we are here today. So there are no right or wrong statements or opinions.
- If you don't feel you have anything to contribute, there's no pressure for you to do so, and if you need to leave during the session, please do so in a quiet manner, so as not to disrupt the group.
- I will lead the discussion and \_\_\_\_\_ will be helping us to take notes. We will record comments but will not record names or other identifying information. Only an analysis and summary of the data will go in our report. If you would like to see how comments are being recorded, please examine what \_\_\_\_\_ is typing.
- This is a non-attribution session. Although we are taking notes on your comments and suggestions, we will not share anything outside this room that can be attributed to any one of you specifically. We ask your cooperation in protecting the privacy of the comments made within this session, so please do not discuss the focus group proceedings after you leave.
- Please keep the crosstalk to a minimum. Let me be the focal point for questions and discussion.
- Any questions?

On the next several pages of your handout are results from the 2012 survey that we will use as part of the discussion today. I will call your attention to the specific item as we reach that part of the discussion.

Please note that the results I will share with you come from the 2012 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey. This survey was conducted in the spring of 2012 with results reported to your Academy and Service leadership as well as the House and Senate Armed Services Committees in December 2012. Our report is available at the Web site shown if you are interested.

I have several questions to ask you today, with a few subtopics in each. I will watch the time so we will be able to cover all questions by the end of this session at [give specific end time].

Let's begin our discussion today with some results of the survey on sexual assault and sexual harassment. Please turn to page 3 of your handout. Here you will see some of the results from our 2012 survey that we will discuss today.

**Time for Question 1:  
15 minutes**

## **1. Perceptions about sexual assault and sexual harassment**

- a. Let's start the discussion by discussing the rates for unwanted sexual contact from the 2012 survey. [Ice breaker question] Do you recall taking the survey last spring?
  - i. For women, the rate here at the Naval Academy was 15.1% in 2012. For men it was 2.6%. You can also see the rates in past survey years as well as the average rates at the DoD Academies. Do these

unwanted sexual contact rates seem right to you? Too high, too low? Please discuss.

- ii. Please note the description of sexual harassment and sexist behavior on page 4, then the rates on page 4 and 5. [Explain how sexual harassment is comprised of several types of behavior if they ask. And sexist behavior is based on gender, not sexual behaviors] For women, the sexual harassment rate here at the Naval Academy was 61% in 2012. For men it was 10%. For women, the rate for sexist behavior was 94% in 2012. For men it was 46%. Do these rates seem right to you? Too high, too low? Please discuss.
- b. A finding from the survey suggests that people who experience unwanted sexual contact also tend to experience other unwanted behaviors, such as sexual harassment and sexist behavior. Take a look at the rates for sexual harassment on page 4. This is for all men and women at this Academy. If we look at the rates for sexual harassment of just those men and women who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year, the rates for sexual harassment are higher at 93% for women and approximately 63% for men. I say approximately for men because there are too few here at the Naval Academy to estimate accurately, so we used an average across the DoD Academies to get 63%. Look also at the rates for sexist behavior on page 5. For those who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year, sexist behavior was also experienced by 100% of the women and approximately 76% of the men.
- i. What do you think about the relationship between sexual assault and sexual harassment? Sexist behavior?
  - ii. If someone gets away with sexual harassment or sexist comments, do you think they might move on to more serious behaviors like unwanted touching or sexual acts? Have you seen any examples of someone moving from one type of unwanted behavior to another?
  - iii. Do you sense attitudes of disrespect toward women at the Academy that might contribute to sexual assault or other unwanted gender-related behaviors? Are there any attitudes of disrespect toward men? Please describe. [Keep the discussion to gender issues if they start discussing racial, religious, political, or other groups.]
  - iv. What can/should the Academy do to address sexist behavior or sexual harassment? Do you sense that there is acceptance of some of these behaviors as being part of the military environment? [If students acknowledge that there is acceptance, probe further on who they sense that from. Ask if it is part of the Academy “culture” or “military culture.” Have them explain how they learned the “culture.”]

- c. Let's go back to the earlier discussion of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment rates for men from the survey. You indicated they are [higher or lower] than what you might have expected. Who would you think are typically offenders? Where would you think such incidents are most likely to occur?
- d. I would like to end this section by asking for your perceptions of the cause of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment behaviors at the Academy.
  - i. With all the emphasis on prevention, why do they still occur?
  - ii. Does pornography or sexting play a role?
  - iii. What more can be done to prevent unwanted sexual contact? Sexual harassment?

OK, now let's switch gears and talk about reporting unwanted sexual contact.

**Time for Question 2:  
10 minutes**

## **2. Reporting**

- a. Please go to the table on page 5 of your handout. Here at the Naval Academy there were 7 unrestricted reports of unwanted sexual contact last year, 6 restricted reports, and 10 informal sexual harassment complaints filed. These represent only about one twentieth [15.1% of 874 total women and 2.6% of 3,563 men = 132+93 = 225 potential reports] of the reports that could have been filed based on the survey results. Why do you think the majority of students who experienced unwanted sexual contact choose not to report the incident? Why did they choose not to report sexual harassment?
- b. What more can be done to encourage reporting? What barriers could be eliminated? Does the competitive nature of the Academy inhibit people from reporting?
- c. Many students who experience unwanted sexual contact say they did not report it but "Took care of it myself." What does that mean to you? What actions would one take?
- d. Do you think someone would be more or less inclined to report unwanted sexual contact that involved an offender of the same sex for example, male-on-male or female-on-female? Sexual harassment?

We have talked a while about unwanted sexual contact and reporting. Now I want to talk to you a little about the locations where it might occur.

**Time for Question 3:  
10 minutes**

### **3. Places where unwanted sexual contact is most likely to occur**

- a. Most victims of unwanted sexual contact indicated on the survey that the incident occurred on Academy grounds (67%). Where would the most likely place be at this Academy for an incident to occur? Discuss locations within Bancroft Hall specifically.
- b. How could these places be made safer?
- c. Are there other locations, such as field settings, sports team trips, club trips, on ship, or at another military location where students might be more vulnerable to unwanted sexual contact? Please describe.
- d. Are students on summer training programs away from campus more vulnerable (33%)? How could these places or experiences be made safer?

Let's turn our discussion specifically to multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact for a few minutes.

**Time for Question 4:  
10 minutes**

### **4. Multiple experiences of sexual assault**

- a. Survey results show that victims often experience more than one incident of unwanted sexual contact. Do you think behaviors tend to progress, such as experiences of touching first, followed by more aggressive behaviors?
- b. Do you think someone would be more inclined to report or seek help after experiencing one type of behaviors more than others? [If asked for clarification, ask if someone would be more likely to report completed sex versus attempted sex or touching?]
- c. If a victim were to experience multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact, do you think it would be more likely to be from the same offender/perpetrator or different ones? Do you think a perpetrator who assaults one person would also be likely to assault someone else?
- d. Is there a sense that perpetrators have a good chance of getting away with unwanted sexual contact, hence they repeat their actions? Are perpetrators getting away with these behaviors because victims do not report it or perpetrators are not charged and punished?

Let's discuss leadership's response to unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment for a moment.

**Time for Question 5:  
10 minutes**

### **5. Leadership Perceptions**

- a. What do your faculty, coaches/activity leaders, and military staff [such as Company Officers or Chief Petty Officers] say to you about sexual assault and other unwanted behaviors? Can you give an example? [Depending on

the response, ask if the discussions are helpful or what they would like their leaders to say to them.]

- b. How well do faculty/staff lead by example? Do they say something when they witness a questionable behavior? Do they help set a standard or give the impression that a certain amount of “locker room talk” is acceptable? [Depending on the responses, probe for good or bad examples.]
- c. Do you think it is the responsibility of faculty/staff to address these issues? Do you see them as roles models? Who specifically [positions, not names]?
- d. Has your Company Officer or CPO ever discussed unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment with you? What kind of information was discussed? Was it helpful? Why? What would you like to hear from them?
- e. What does senior leadership say about unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment? How do you think they handle reported cases of unwanted sexual contact? Do you think leadership would react differently to same-sex unwanted sexual contact? How does leadership respond to instances of sexual harassment? [Probe for good and bad examples, or instances where behaviors are tolerated or overlooked.]
- f. In the past few months, have you noticed any new emphasis on unwanted sexual contact or sexual harassment? What has been done? Do you think these steps will make a difference? Do you think there will be any unintended consequences [if asked for examples, ask if the message was negatively received or made them angry]?
- g. Do you know the SARC/victims’ advocate? Would you talk to them about an incident of unwanted sexual contact? Why or why not?
- h. USNA only - The Academy and Navy leadership have continued to emphasize prevention and response to sexual assault. How do you regard the messages you receive on these issues? Is the mode of delivery effective through SHAPE, SAPR-L/SAPR-R, reform briefs, senior leadership briefings, etc.? What could be done to improve the message and emphasis?

Now let's turn our attention briefly to the topic of training at your Academy.

Time for Question 6:  
10 minutes

## 6. Training

- a. What type of training have you received this year in the prevention and response to unwanted sexual contact? Sexual harassment?
- b. When do you receive this training? Is the timing and location convenient for you?

- c. Who typically conducts the training? Are they effective trainers?
- d. What training did you consider to be the most effective this year?
- e. Did you learn anything this past year that you did not know before? What? Is there something you would like to know more about?
- f. [Seniors only and the mixed junior/senior session] Do you feel prepared to deal with issues of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment among your subordinates when you enter active duty? What training was the most helpful? What could be done better to prepare you?

I would like to wrap up our session today with a couple of final questions.

Time for Question 7:  
10 minutes

## **7. Additional recommendations for addressing unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment**

- a. Do you think the Academy should do more to make counseling or Sexual Assault Prevention and Response resources available to students who experienced trauma prior to entering the military?
- b. As future leaders of the military, what would you do now in your midshipman role to address the problem of unwanted sexual contact? Sexual harassment?
- c. Do you believe it would be productive to have a Midshipman "Dignity and Respect Code," much like the Honor Concept, in order to instill these values in the midshipman system?
- d. What else can you tell us about unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment at the Academy? What did we not ask that we should have?

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group. As I mentioned at the beginning, we will treat all of your comments anonymously. There is no attribution to any of you for the specific comments you made today. Please also respect that non-attribution when you leave here today. Our goal is to provide the best data possible and you have helped us greatly today with your comments and insights.

One last comment – on the last page of the handout you will see a list of resources available to you if you would like to follow up with us or have any questions. It also lists Academy resources if you would like to talk further to someone about this study or any experiences you might have had with unwanted gender-related behaviors.

Thank you again for your participation.



**Appendix F.**  
**USNA Midshipmen Handout**



**2013 Service Academy  
Gender Relations Focus  
Group  
U.S. Naval Academy**

**Handout for Midshipmen  
Participants**

## ***Purpose***

We have asked you to be here with us to help us investigate issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response. You might recall that in the spring of last year students at your Academy were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey on these topics. This year, a series of focus groups are being conducted to provide additional information to DoD and Academy leadership. Similar focus groups are being conducted at all three DoD Service Academies as well as the U.S. Coast Guard Academy and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

This is a voluntary focus group. The Academy staff member who invited you to participate in this session should have informed you that we would be discussing gender-related issues, including sexual assault and harassment, and asked if you were willing to participate. If you prefer not to sit in on this focus group, you are free to leave or to sit quietly while others participate.

- Let's begin by talking about why we are doing the focus group. While the press and others may claim to know what is going on at the Academies, members of Congress and your senior leaders want to hear directly from you about the issues that affect you. Congress directed the Secretary of Defense to conduct an annual assessment cycle of surveys and focus groups in alternating years on gender issues at each of the Academies. This is an opportunity for you to share your perceptions and recommendations directly with senior leaders.
- Focus group participants sometimes say "I have not experienced any of these behaviors, so why should I stay for this session?" The purpose of this focus group is to understand these issues at your Academy. You're the experts on what it's like to go to the Academies and we want to hear your opinion about Academy life. It doesn't matter if you have or have not had gender-related experiences. We do not want to discuss your personal experiences with sexual assault and sexual harassment. We do want to discuss issues in general so we can provide guidance to leadership to create the best environment possible for you.

### ***Ground Rules for Discussion***

Thank you in advance for participating in this important focus group. We will follow a few ground rules for the focus group:

- Please respect each other's opinions. We know you will have different perspectives on issues covered in this focus group. We want to hear those views—that's why we are here today. So there are no right or wrong statements or opinions.
- If you don't feel you have anything to contribute, there's no pressure for you to do so, and if you need to leave during the session, please do so in a quiet manner, so as not to disrupt the group.
- I will lead the discussion and our recorder will be helping us to take notes. We will record comments but will not record names or other identifying information. Only an analysis and summary of the data will go in our report. If you would like to see how comments are being recorded, please examine what is being typed.
- This is a non-attribution session. Although we are taking notes on your comments and suggestions, we will not share anything outside this room that can be attributed to any one of you specifically. We ask your cooperation in protecting the privacy of the comments made within this session, so please do not discuss the focus group proceedings after you leave.
- Please keep the crosstalk to a minimum. Let me be the focal point for questions and discussion.
- Any questions?

### ***Discussion Resources***

On the next several pages are results from the 2012 survey that we will use as part of the discussion today. I will call your attention to the specific item as we reach that part of the discussion.

Please note that the results I will share with you come from the 2012 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey. This survey was conducted in the spring of 2012 with results reported to your Academy and Service leadership as well as the House and Senate Armed Services Committees in December 2012.

To assure statistically reliability of the survey results, we surveyed all of the female midshipmen and a sample of approximately one-third of male midshipmen. The full report is available on the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPRO) Web site at:

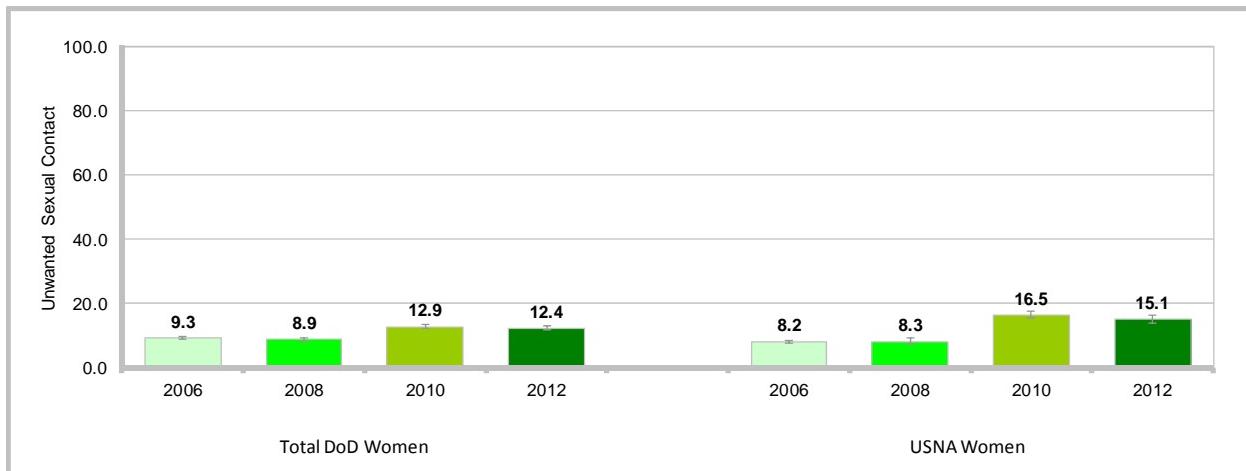
[http://www.saprmil/media/pdf/reports/FINAL\\_APY\\_11-12\\_MSA\\_Report.pdf](http://www.saprmil/media/pdf/reports/FINAL_APY_11-12_MSA_Report.pdf)



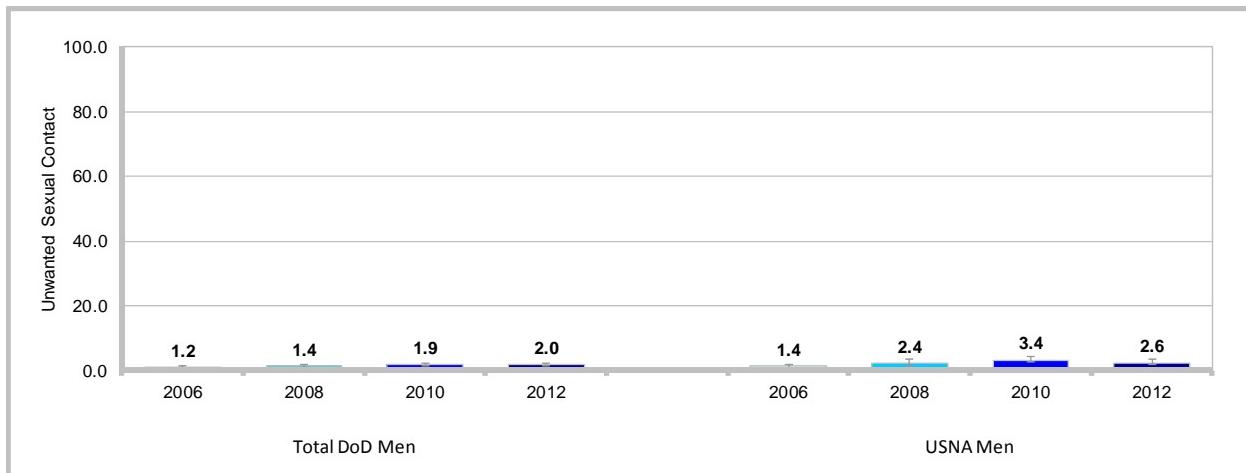
## Unwanted Sexual Contact

Unwanted sexual contact consists of a range of unwanted behaviors including unwanted sexual touching, attempted sex, and completed sex.

### 1. Unwanted Sexual Contact Rates for Women



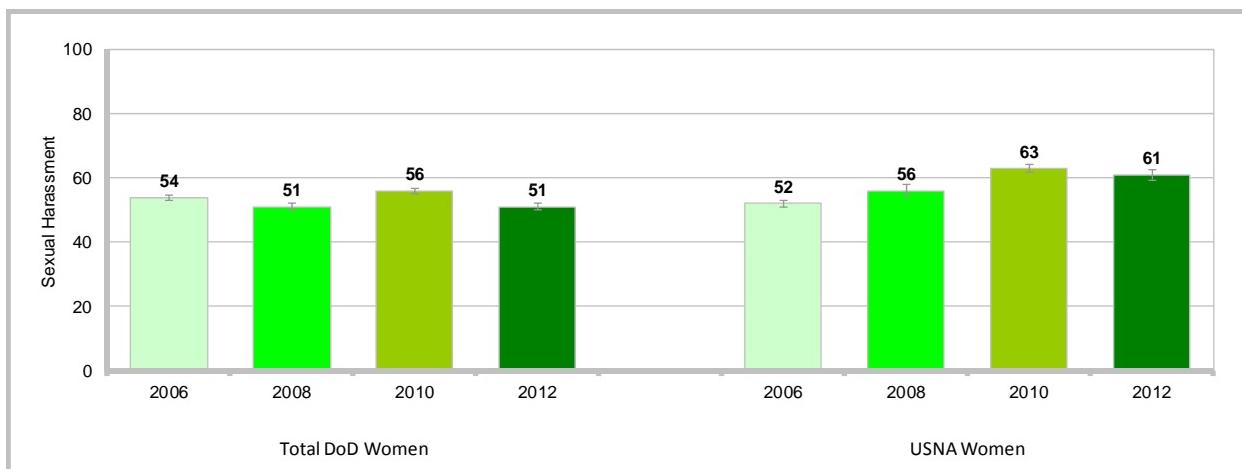
### 2. Unwanted Sexual Contact Rates for Men



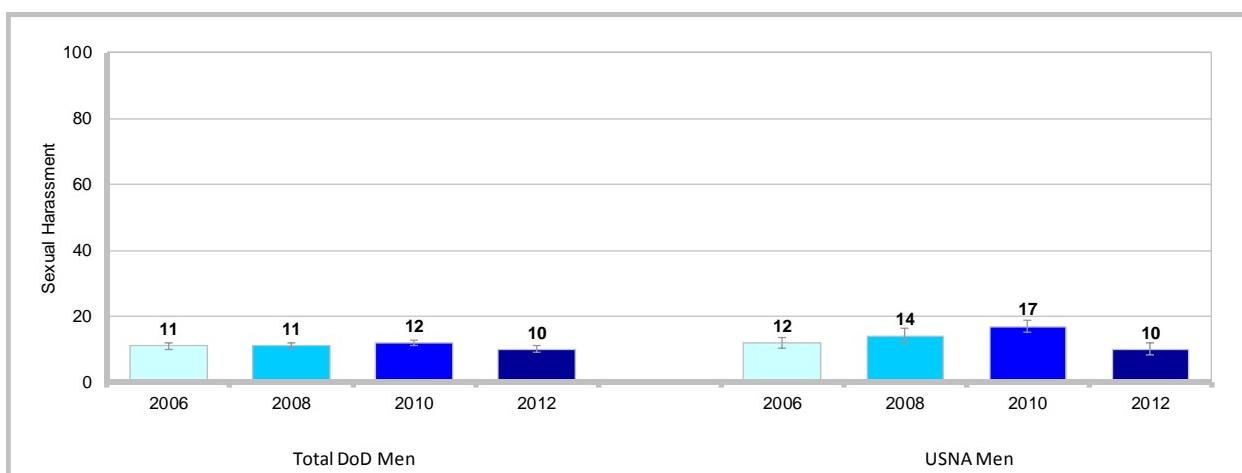
## Sexual Harassment and Sexist Behavior

- **Sexual harassment**
  - Crude/Offensive Behavior – verbal/nonverbal behaviors of a sexual nature that were offensive or embarrassing
  - Unwanted Sexual Attention – unwanted attempts to establish a sexual relationship
  - Sexual Coercion – classic *quid pro quo* instances of special treatment or favoritism conditioned on sexual cooperation
  - One “labeling” item that asks if the student considers any of the selected behaviors to be sexual harassment
- **Sexist behavior**
  - Verbal/nonverbal behaviors that convey insulting, offensive, and/or condescending attitudes based on one’s gender

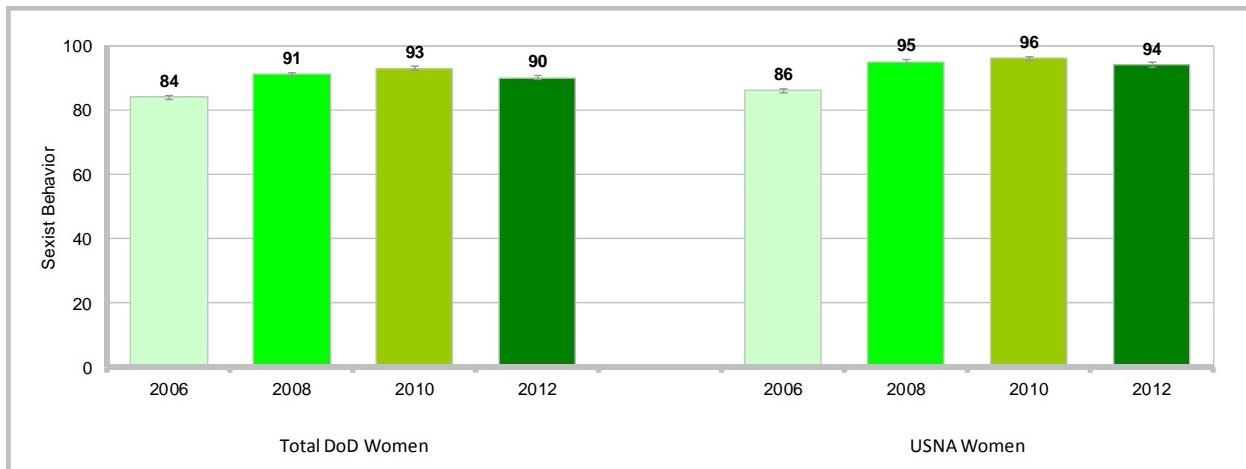
### 3. Sexual Harassment Rates for Women



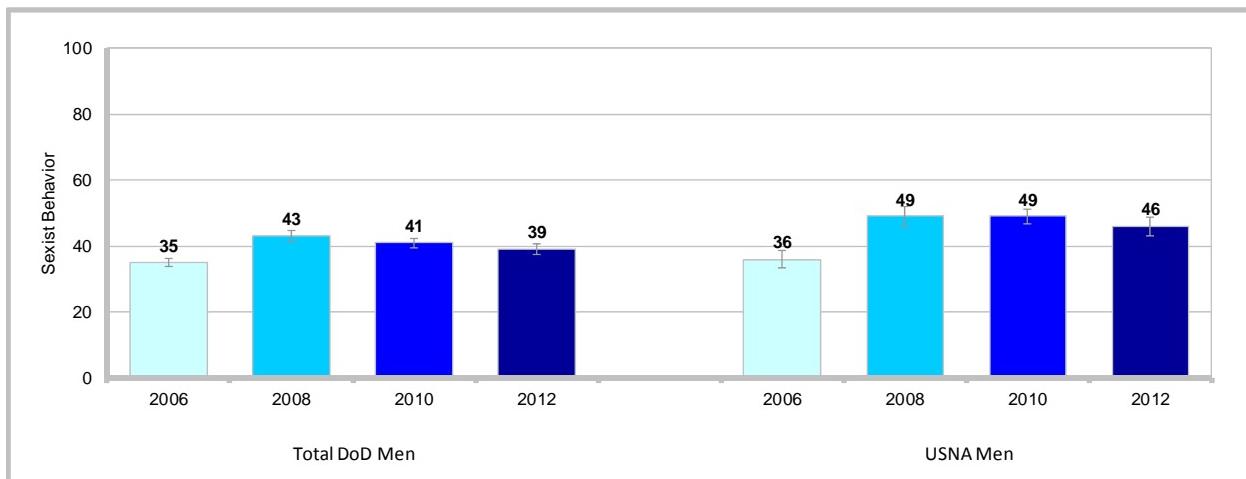
### 4. Sexual Harassment Rates for Men



## 5. Sexist Behavior Rates for Women



## 6. Sexist Behavior Rates for Men



## 7. Number of incidents reported in the past year

Type of Report	Number of Reports
Sexual Assault – Unrestricted	7
Sexual Assault – Restricted	6
Sexual Harassment – Informal Complaints	10



We appreciate your participation in this focus group. In the event you would like to discuss issues related to the focus group with someone from DMDC during (or after) our visit to the U.S. Naval Academy, please contact Ms. Kristin Williams at 571-372-1033 or DSN 372-1033.

If you wish to provide feedback regarding the focus group process or the focus group content, please send us an e-mail at: SA-Survey@mail.mil. If you know of others who might like to contact a member of the DMDC team, please share this information with them. You may also use the Department of Defense SAFE Hotline at 877-995-5247 to report abuse of authority, mismanagement, fraud, and waste.

If you feel uncomfortable or uneasy after participating in the focus group, and/or if you are a survivor of sexual assault, or have experienced sexual harassment or stalking, we strongly encourage you to contact the following resources that are available to you:

Midshipmen Development Center: (410) 293-4897

Sexual Assault Response Coordinator: (410) 293-1502

Sexual Assault Duty Victim Advocate: (24/7) (443) 336-2637

Website: [www.usna.edu/SAPRO](http://www.usna.edu/SAPRO)

Chaplain's Office: (410) 293-1100 / Duty Chaplain: (443) 871-2339 (after duty hrs-Main Office)

Human Research Protection Program: (410) 293-2533 or [HRPPoffice@usna.edu](mailto:HRPPoffice@usna.edu)

**Appendix G.**

**USNA Faculty, Athletic Staff, and Military**

**Cadre Focus Group Guide**



## 2013 Faculty/Activity/Military Focus Group Guide

### Introduction to the Faculty/Activity/Military Focus Group

Good morning/afternoon. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am with the Defense Manpower Data Center. My colleagues with me this morning/afternoon are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ also with DMDC. We have asked you to be here with us to help us investigate issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response. You might recall that last year students at your Academy were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey on these topics. This year, as was done two years ago, a series of focus groups are being conducted to provide information to DoD and Academy leadership. This year is the first year we have invited members of the faculty, athletic and activity staffs, and military cadre to participate. Similar focus groups are being conducted at all three DoD Service Academies, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

**Time for briefing  
and introductions:  
5 minutes**

This is a **voluntary focus group**. The Academy staff member who invited you to participate in this session should have informed you that we would be discussing gender-related issues, including sexual assault and harassment, and asked if you were willing to participate. If you prefer not to sit in on this focus group, you are free to leave or to sit quietly while others participate.

I have provided each of you with a handout. Please turn to page 1. You can follow along while I share with you the purpose for this focus group and the ground rules we will follow.

- Let's begin by talking about why we are doing the focus group. Congress directed the Secretary of Defense to conduct an annual assessment cycle of surveys and focus groups in alternating years on gender issues at each of the Academies. This is an opportunity for you and students to share your perceptions and recommendations directly with senior leaders.
- This is the first year we have invited members of the faculty, athletic and activity staffs, and military cadre to participate. Because you interact with the students, we believe you are in a position to share valuable insights with us on these important issues. We do not want to discuss any specific cases of sexual assault or sexual harassment. We do want to discuss issues in general so we can provide guidance to leadership to create the best environment possible for you.

I want to thank you in advance for participating in this important focus group and go over a few ground rules for the focus group:

- Please respect each others' opinions. We know you will have different perspectives on issues covered in this focus group. We want to hear those views—that's why we are here today. So there are no right or wrong statements or opinions.

- If you don't feel you have anything to contribute, there's no pressure for you to do so, and if you need to leave during the session, please do so in a quiet manner, so as not to disrupt the group.
- I will lead the discussion and \_\_\_\_\_ will be helping us to take notes. We will record comments but will not record names or other identifying information. Only an analysis and summary of the data will go in our report. If you would like to see how comments are being recorded, please examine what \_\_\_\_\_ is typing.
- This is a non-attribution session. Although we are taking notes on your comments and suggestions, we will not share anything outside this room that can be attributed to any one of you specifically. We ask your cooperation in protecting the privacy of the comments made within this session, so please do not discuss the focus group proceedings after you leave.
- Please keep the crosstalk to a minimum. Let me be the focal point for questions and discussion.
- Any questions?

On the next several pages of your handout are results from the 2012 survey that we will use as part of the discussion today. I will call your attention to the specific item as we reach that part of the discussion.

Please note that the results I will share with you come from the 2012 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey. This survey was conducted in the spring of 2012 with results reported to your Academy and Service leadership as well as the House and Senate Armed Services Committees in December 2012. Our report is available at the Web site shown if you are interested.

I have several questions to ask you today, with a few subtopics in each. I will watch the time so we will be able to cover all questions by the end of this session at [give specific end time].

Let's begin our discussion today with some results of the survey on sexual assault and sexual harassment. Please turn to page 3 of your handout. Here you will see some of the results from our 2012 survey that we will discuss today.

**Time for Question 1:  
15 minutes**

## **1. Perceptions about unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment**

- a. Let's start the discussion by discussing the rates for unwanted sexual contact from the 2012 survey. [Ice breaker question] Are you familiar with these findings?
  - i. For women, the rate here at the Naval Academy was 15.1% in 2012. For men it was 2.6%. You can also see the rates in past survey years as well as the average rates at the DoD Academies. Do these rates seem right to you based on your knowledge about the midshipman brigade? Too high, too low? Please discuss.

- ii. Please note the description of sexual harassment and sexist behavior on page 4, then the rates on page 4 and 5. [Explain how sexual harassment is comprised of several types of behavior if they ask. And sexist behavior is based on gender, not sexual behaviors] For women, the sexual harassment rate here at the Naval Academy was 61% in 2012. For men it was 10%. For women, the rate for sexist behavior was 94% in 2012. For men it was 46%. Do these rates seem right to you? Too high, too low? Please discuss.
- b. A finding from the survey suggests that people who experience unwanted sexual contact also tend to experience other unwanted behaviors, such as sexual harassment and sexist behavior. Take a look at the rates for sexual harassment on page 4. This is for all male and female cadets at this Academy. If we look at the rates for sexual harassment of just those men and women who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year, the rates for sexual harassment are higher at 93% for women and approximately 63% for men. I say approximately for men because there are too few here at the Naval Academy to estimate accurately, so we used an average across the DoD Academies to get 63%. Look also at the rates for sexist behavior on page 5. For those who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year, sexist behavior was also experienced by 100% of the women and approximately 76% of the men.
- i. What do you think about the relationship between unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment? Sexist behavior?
  - ii. If someone gets away with sexual harassment or sexist comments, do you think they might move on to more serious behaviors like unwanted touching or sexual acts? Have you seen any examples of someone moving from one type of unwanted behavior to another?
  - iii. Do you think a student who had a previous experience of unwanted sexual contact, before entering the Academy or in previous years at the Academy, is someone more vulnerable for future assaults? How? How do you think they might feel about getting help? How would you advertise help for people with such a background? Is there anything that could be done to help people avoid the “spotlight” if they seek assistance?
  - iv. Do you sense attitudes of disrespect toward women at the Academy that might contribute to unwanted sexual contact or other unwanted gender-related behaviors? Are there any attitudes of disrespect toward men? Please describe. [Keep the discussion to gender issues if they start discussing racial, religious, political, or other groups.]
  - v. What can/should the Academy do to address sexist behavior or sexual harassment? Do you sense that students accept some of these

behaviors as being part of the military environment? [If participants acknowledge that there is acceptance, probe further on where students get that perception. Ask if it is part of the Academy “culture” or “military culture.” Have them explain how they define the “culture.”]

- c. Let's go back to the earlier discussion of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment rates for men from the survey. You indicated they are [higher or lower] than what you might have expected. Who would you think are typically offenders? Where would you think such incidents are most likely to occur?
- d. I would like to end this section by asking your perceptions of the cause of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment behaviors at the Academy?
  - i. With all the emphasis on prevention, why do they still occur?
  - ii. Does pornography or sexting play a role?
  - iii. What more can be done to prevent unwanted sexual contact? Sexual harassment?

OK, now let's switch gears and talk about roles and responsibilities with regard to unwanted sexual contact.

**Time for Question 2:  
10 minutes**

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

- a. What do you see as your role in helping reduce unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment? Do you discuss unwanted sexual contact prevention and response with your students? Do you discuss issues about sexual harassment with them?
- b. What resources and training do you receive to prepare you to discuss unwanted behaviors with students and to advise them when an incident occurs? What has worked well? What has not worked well? What training or resources would be helpful to you?
- c. Are you aware of instances where one of your students has experienced unwanted sexual contact or sexual harassment? [Do not discuss cases by name.] What would you do if a student came to you for advice about an incident of unwanted sexual contact they or a friend experienced?
- d. Has Academy senior leadership engaged you in discussions of unwanted sexual contact prevention and response? If yes, how so? If not, what information would you find useful to have?
- e. Is there anything that prevents you from being more effective in supporting messages about unwanted sexual contact prevention to the students?
- f. What is your opinion of how unwanted sexual contact cases are handled?

- g. Do you think leadership would react differently to same-sex unwanted sexual contact?

I would like to ask several questions now about the locations where unwanted sexual contact might occur.

Time for Question 3:  
10 minutes

**3. Places where unwanted sexual contact is most likely to occur**

- a. Most victims of unwanted sexual contact indicated on the survey that the incident occurred on Academy grounds (67%). Where would the most likely place be at this Academy for an incident to occur? Discuss locations within Bancroft Hall specifically.
- b. How could these places be made safer?
- c. Are there other locations, such as field settings, sports team trips, club trips, on ship, or at another military location where students might be more vulnerable to unwanted sexual contact? Please describe.
- d. Are students on summer training programs away from campus more vulnerable (33%)? How could these places or experiences be made safer?

Let's turn our discussion specifically to multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact for a few minutes.

Time for Question 4:  
10 minutes

**4. Multiple experiences of unwanted sexual contact**

- a. Survey results show that victims often experience more than one incident of unwanted sexual contact. Do you think behaviors tend to progress, such as experiences of touching first, followed by more aggressive behaviors?
- b. Do you think someone would be more inclined to report or seek help after experiencing one type of behaviors more than others? [If asked for clarification, ask if someone would be more likely to report completed sex versus attempted sex or touching?]
- c. If a victim were to experience multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact, do you think it would be more likely to be from the same offender/perpetrator or different ones? Do you think a perpetrator who assaults one person would also be likely to assault someone else?
- d. Is there a sense that perpetrators have a good chance of getting away with unwanted sexual contact, hence they repeat their actions? Are perpetrators getting away with these behaviors because victims do not report it or perpetrators are not charged and punished?

Let's discuss briefly the phenomenon of victim blaming.

Time for Question 5:  
5 minutes

## 5. Victim Blaming

- a. It is not uncommon for people to blame a victim for an incident of unwanted sexual contact saying things like "she led him on" or "she was trying to avoid getting into trouble herself for an offense, like underage drinking."
- b. Do you ever hear those comments? How do you react to such comments?
- c. Do you hear the same kind of "victim blaming" comments when the victim is a male? If not, why do you suppose there is a difference?"
- d. What can be done to address victim blaming?

Now let's discuss interactions with the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response staff here at the Academy.

Time for Question 6:  
5 minutes

## 6. Interactions with SAPR Staff

- a. Do you interact with the professional unwanted sexual contact or sexual harassment staff? What is the nature of the interaction?
- b. What is your opinion about the programs for prevention and response?
- c. What is your opinion of the training the students receive in sexual harassment and unwanted sexual contact prevention and response? What do they tell you about the training? Is it effective? How could it be improved?
- d. What would work better to reach students and help them take the training seriously? Do you see instances where midshipman leaders deal effectively with inappropriate behaviors based on the training they received?
- e. Do you think the training adequately prepares the students to respond to an unwanted sexual contact once they graduate? How could it be improved?

I want to ask you a couple of quick questions about potential cultural change.

Time for Question 7:  
10 minutes

## 7. Cultural Change

- a. One way some people believe the Academy can improve unwanted sexual contact prevention and response is to change the culture and attitudes toward this issue. Do you agree? Please provide some examples of areas where change is needed.
- b. How can such a cultural change be made at this Academy? What elements need to be addressed?

- c. How does the Academy secure buy-in for change from the students? From leadership, faculty, and staff?
- d. Who should lead a cultural change? How would they do so?
- e. Do you think students treat each other with dignity and respect? What does it take to reach students about the importance of civility and proper behavior toward each other? Are these potential areas for cultural or attitudinal change?
- f. Are students prepared to lead other students with regard to preventing and responding to unwanted behaviors? Do they take that responsibility seriously?
- g. Do you believe it would be productive to have a Midshipman “Dignity and Respect Code” much like the Honor Concept, in order to instill these values in the midshipman system?
- h. As preparation for future leadership positions, should issues such as proper behavior, unwanted sexual contact/harassment prevention, and response to unwanted sexual contact/harassment be made into graded coursework to ensure students take it seriously? Would that enhance accountability?
- i. Does the highly competitive nature of the Academy affect how students treat each other with respect to unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment? How does the competitive nature affect reporting of inappropriate behaviors?

Now I want to ask you a couple of quick questions about recent changes here at the Academy.

**Time for Question 8:  
5 minutes**

## **8. Recent Changes**

- a. Are you aware of any changes the Academy has implemented recently to address unwanted sexual contact or sexual harassment [such as tighter dormitory patrols]? Please describe.
- b. Are these changes effective? Did they go far enough? What else could be done?
- c. Is there a point where such actions become counter-productive [unintended consequences]?
- d. Have you seen changes in students over the years in terms of behaviors, attitudes, moral standards, and competitiveness? How do such changes relate to unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment behaviors?

I would like to wrap up our session today with a couple of final questions.

Time for Question 9:  
5 minutes

### **9. Additional recommendations for addressing unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment**

- a. Do you think the Academy should do more to make counseling or Sexual Assault Prevention and Response resources available to students who experienced trauma prior to entering the military?
- b. What else can you tell us about unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment at the Academy? What did we not ask that we should have?

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group. As I mentioned at the beginning, we will treat all of your comments anonymously. There is no attribution to any of you for the specific comments you made today. Please also respect that non-attribution when you leave here today. Our goal is to provide the best data possible and you have helped us greatly today with your comments and insights.

One last comment – on the last page of the handout you will see a list of resources available to you if you would like to follow up with us or have any questions. It also lists Academy resources if you know of a student who would like to talk to someone about any experiences they might have had with unwanted gender-related behaviors.

Thank you again for your participation.

**Appendix H.**  
**USNA Faculty, Athletic Staff, and Military**  
**Cadre Handout**



**2013 Service Academy  
Gender Relations Focus  
Group  
U.S. Naval Academy**

**Handout for Faculty, Athletic  
Staff, Military Cadre  
Participants**

## **Purpose**

We have asked you to be here with us to help us investigate issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response. You might recall that last year students at your Academy were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey on these topics. This year, as was done two years ago, a series of focus groups are being conducted to provide information to DoD and Academy leadership. This year is the first year we have invited members of the faculty, athletic and activity staffs, and military cadre to participate. Similar focus groups are being conducted at all three Service Academies. Focus groups are being done at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy and U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

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- If you don't feel you have anything to contribute, there's no pressure for you to do so, and if you need to leave during the session, please do so in a quiet manner, so as not to disrupt the group.
- I will lead the discussion and our recorder will be helping us to take notes. We will record comments but will not record names or other identifying information. Only an analysis and summary of the data will go in our report. If you would like to see how comments are being recorded, please examine what is being typed.
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- Please keep the crosstalk to a minimum. Let me be the focal point for questions and discussion.
- Any questions?

### ***Discussion Resources***

On the next several pages are results from the 2012 survey that we will use as part of the discussion today. I will call your attention to the specific item as we reach that part of the discussion.

Please note that the results I will share with you come from the 2012 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey. This survey was conducted in spring of 2012 with results reported to your Academy and Service leadership as well as the House and Senate Armed Services Committees in December 2012.

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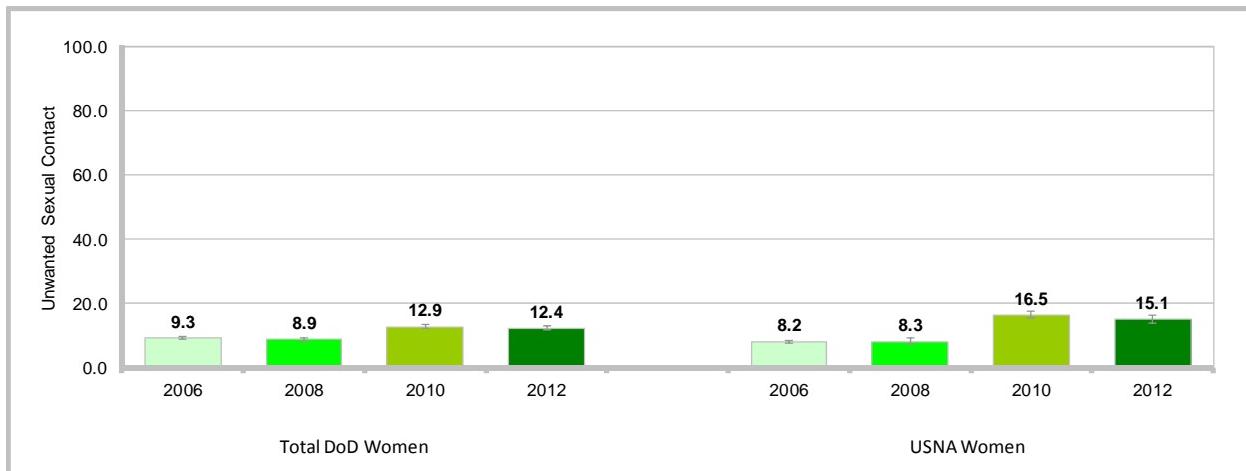
[http://www.sapr.mil/media/pdf/reports/FINAL\\_APY\\_11-12\\_MSA\\_Report.pdf](http://www.sapr.mil/media/pdf/reports/FINAL_APY_11-12_MSA_Report.pdf)



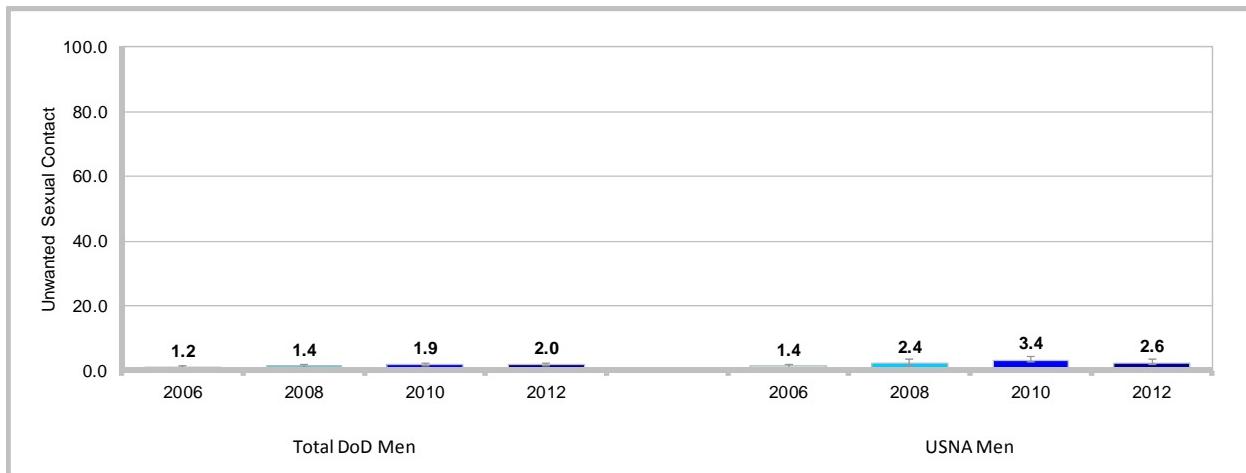
## Unwanted Sexual Contact

Unwanted sexual contact consists of a range of unwanted behaviors including unwanted sexual touching, attempted sex, and completed sex.

### 1. Unwanted Sexual Contact Rates for Women



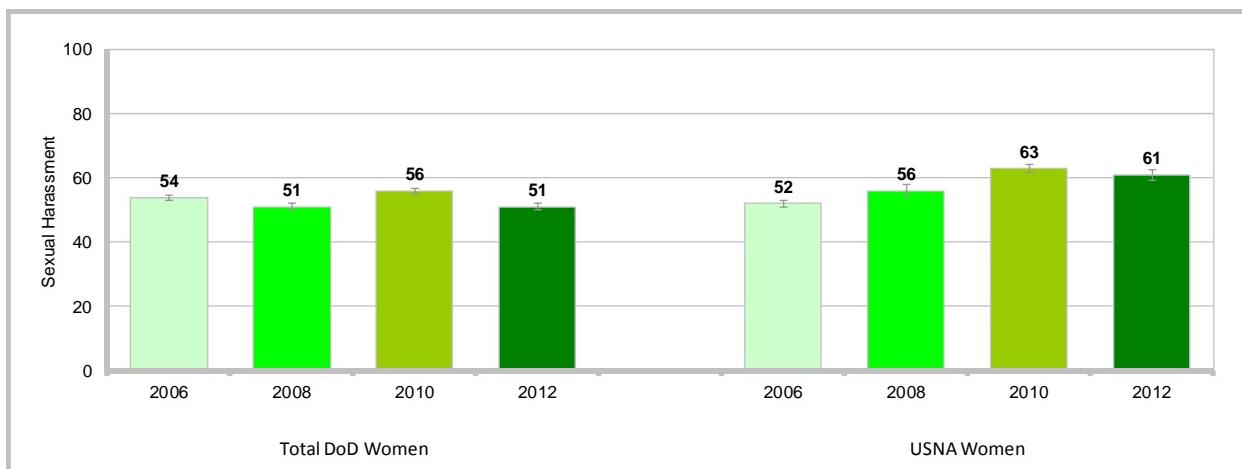
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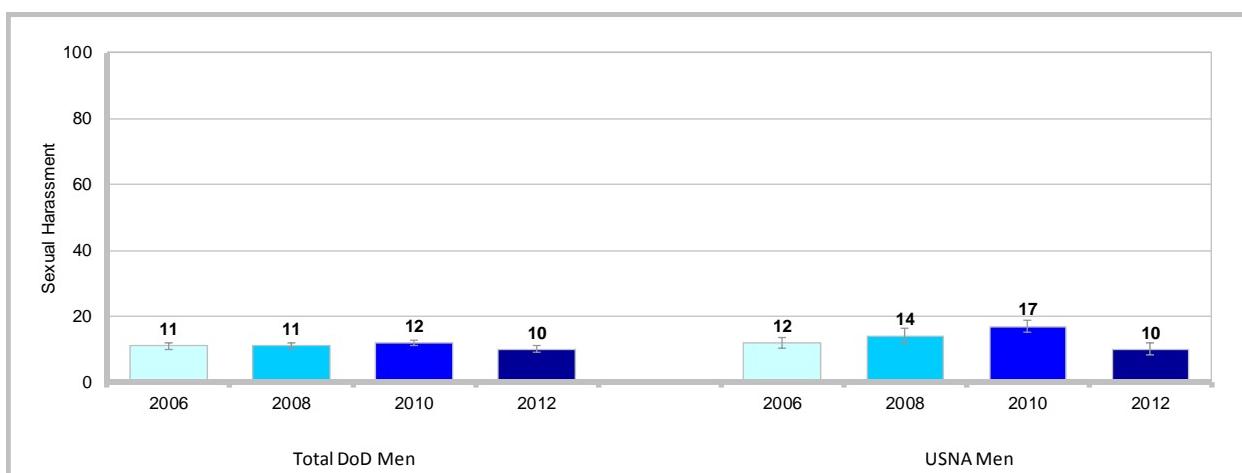
## Sexual Harassment and Sexist Behavior

- **Sexual harassment**
  - Crude/Offensive Behavior – verbal/nonverbal behaviors of a sexual nature that were offensive or embarrassing
  - Unwanted Sexual Attention – unwanted attempts to establish a sexual relationship
  - Sexual Coercion – classic *quid pro quo* instances of special treatment or favoritism conditioned on sexual cooperation
  - One “labeling” item that asks if the student considers any of the selected behaviors to be sexual harassment
- **Sexist behavior**
  - Verbal/nonverbal behaviors that convey insulting, offensive, and/or condescending attitudes based on one’s gender

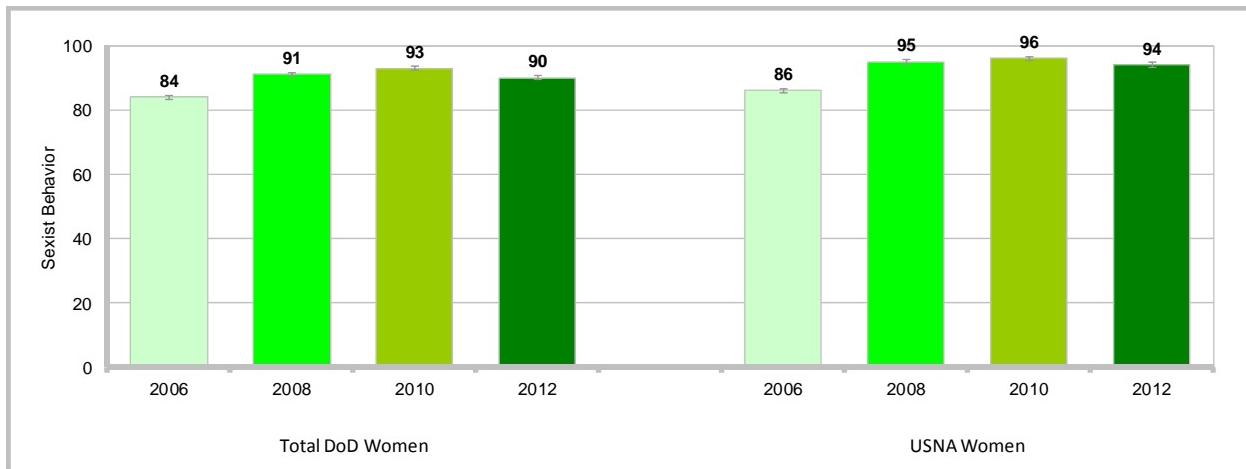
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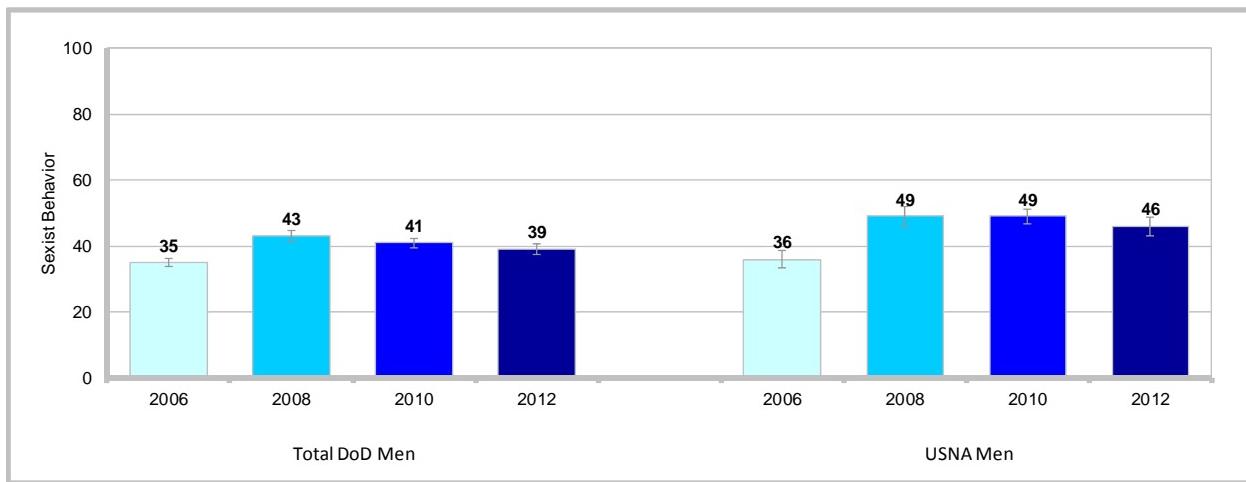
### 4. Sexual Harassment Rates for Men



## 5. Sexist Behavior Rates for Women



## 6. Sexist Behavior Rates for Men



## 7. Number of incidents reported in the past year

Type of Report	Number of Reports
Sexual Assault – Unrestricted	7
Sexual Assault – Restricted	6
Sexual Harassment – Informal Complaints	10



We appreciate your participation in this focus group. In the event you would like to discuss issues related to the focus group with someone from DMDC during (or after) our visit to the U.S. Naval Academy, please contact Ms. Kristin Williams at 571-372-1033 or DSN 372-1033.

If you wish to provide feedback regarding the focus group process or the focus group content, please send us an e-mail at: SA-Survey@mail.mil. If you know of others who might like to contact a member of the DMDC team, please share this information with them. You may also use the Department of Defense SAFE Hotline at 877-995-5247 to report abuse of authority, mismanagement, fraud, and waste.

If you feel uncomfortable or uneasy after participating in the focus group, and/or if you are a survivor of sexual assault, or have experienced sexual harassment or stalking, we strongly encourage you to contact the following resources that are available to you:

Midshipmen Development Center: (410) 293-4897

Sexual Assault Response Coordinator: (410) 293-1502

Sexual Assault Duty Victim Advocate: (24/7) (443) 336-2637

Website: [www.usna.edu/SAPRO](http://www.usna.edu/SAPRO)

Chaplain's Office: (410) 293-1100 / Duty Chaplain: (443) 871-2339 (after duty hrs-Main Office)

Human Research Protection Program: (410) 293-2533 or [HRPPoffice@usna.edu](mailto:HRPPoffice@usna.edu)

**Appendix I.**  
**USAFA Cadet Focus Group Guide**



## 2013 Student Focus Group Guide

### Introduction to the Focus Group

Good morning/afternoon. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am with the Defense Manpower Data Center. My colleagues with me this morning/afternoon are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ also with DMDC. We have asked you to be here with us to help us investigate issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response. You might recall that last year students at your Academy were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey on these topics. This year, as was done two years ago, a series of focus groups are being conducted to provide information to DoD and Academy leadership. Similar focus groups are being conducted at all three DoD Service Academies, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

**Time for briefing  
and introductions:  
5 minutes**

This is a **voluntary focus group**. The Academy staff member who invited you to participate in this session should have informed you that we would be discussing gender-related issues, including sexual assault and harassment, and asked if you were willing to participate. If you prefer not to sit in on this focus group, you are free to leave or to sit quietly while others participate.

I have provided each of you with a handout. Please turn to page 1. You can follow along while I share with you the purpose for this focus group and the ground rules we will follow.

- Let's begin by talking about why we are doing the focus group. While the press and others may claim to know what is going on at the Academies, members of Congress and your senior leaders want to hear directly from you about the issues that affect you. Congress directed the Secretary of Defense to conduct an annual assessment cycle of surveys and focus groups in alternating years on gender issues at each of the Academies. This is an opportunity for you to share your perceptions and recommendations directly with senior leaders.
- Focus group participants sometimes say "I have not experienced any of these behaviors, so why should I stay for this session?" The purpose of this focus group is to understand these issues at your Academy. You're the experts on what it's like to go to the Academies and we want to hear your opinion about Academy life. It doesn't matter if you *have* or *have not* had gender-related experiences. We do not want to discuss your personal experiences with sexual assault and sexual harassment. We do want to discuss issues in general so we can provide guidance to leadership to create the best environment possible for you.

I want to thank you in advance for participating in this important focus group and go over a few ground rules for the focus group:

- Please respect each others' opinions. We know you will have different perspectives on issues covered in this focus group. We want to hear those views—that's why we are here today. So there are no right or wrong statements or opinions.
- If you don't feel you have anything to contribute, there's no pressure for you to do so, and if you need to leave during the session, please do so in a quiet manner, so as not to disrupt the group.
- I will lead the discussion and \_\_\_\_\_ will be helping us to take notes. We will record comments but will not record names or other identifying information. Only an analysis and summary of the data will go in our report. If you would like to see how comments are being recorded, please examine what \_\_\_\_\_ is typing.
- This is a non-attribution session. Although we are taking notes on your comments and suggestions, we will not share anything outside this room that can be attributed to any one of you specifically. We ask your cooperation in protecting the privacy of the comments made within this session, so please do not discuss the focus group proceedings after you leave.
- Please keep the crosstalk to a minimum. Let me be the focal point for questions and discussion.
- Any questions?

On the next several pages of your handout are results from the 2012 survey that we will use as part of the discussion today. I will call your attention to the specific item as we reach that part of the discussion.

Please note that the results I will share with you come from the 2012 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey. This survey was conducted in the spring of 2012 with results reported to your Academy and Service leadership as well as the House and Senate Armed Services Committees in December 2012. Our report is available at the Web site shown if you are interested.

I have several questions to ask you today, with a few subtopics in each. I will watch the time so we will be able to cover all questions by the end of this session at [give specific end time].

Let's begin our discussion today with some results of the survey on sexual assault and sexual harassment. Please turn to page 3 of your handout. Here you will see some of the results from our 2012 survey that we will discuss today.

**Time for Question 1:  
15 minutes**

## **1. Perceptions about sexual assault and sexual harassment**

- a. Let's start the discussion by discussing the rates for unwanted sexual contact from the 2012 survey. [Ice breaker question] Do you recall taking the survey last spring?
  - i. For women, the rate here at the Air Force Academy was 11.2% in 2012. For men it was 1.7%. You can also see the rates in past survey years as well as the average rates at the DoD Academies. Do these

unwanted sexual contact rates seem right to you? Too high, too low? Please discuss.

- ii. Please note the description of sexual harassment and sexist behavior on page 4, then the rates on page 4 and 5. [Explain how sexual harassment is comprised of several types of behavior if they ask. And sexist behavior is based on gender, not sexual behaviors] For women, the sexual harassment rate here at the Air Force Academy was 44% in 2012. For men it was 11%. For women, the rate for sexist behavior was 85% in 2012. For men it was 37%. Do these rates seem right to you? Too high, too low? Please discuss.
- b. A finding from the survey suggests that people who experience unwanted sexual contact also tend to experience other unwanted behaviors, such as sexual harassment and sexist behavior. Take a look at the rates for sexual harassment on page 4. This is for all men and women at this Academy. If we look at the rates for sexual harassment of just those men and women who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year, the rates for sexual harassment are higher at 88% for women and approximately 63% for men. I say approximately for men because there are too few here at the Air Force Academy to estimate accurately, so we used an average across the DoD Academies to get 63%. Look also at the rates for sexist behavior on page 5. For those who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year, sexist behavior was also experienced by 93% of the women and approximately 76% of the men.
- i. What do you think about the relationship between sexual assault and sexual harassment? Sexist behavior?
  - ii. If someone gets away with sexual harassment or sexist comments, do you think they might move on to more serious behaviors like unwanted touching or sexual acts? Have you seen any examples of someone moving from one type of unwanted behavior to another?
  - iii. Do you sense attitudes of disrespect toward women at the Academy that might contribute to sexual assault or other unwanted gender-related behaviors? Are there any attitudes of disrespect toward men? Please describe. [Keep the discussion to gender issues if they start discussing racial, religious, political, or other groups.]
  - iv. What can/should the Academy do to address sexist behavior or sexual harassment? Do you sense that there is acceptance of some of these behaviors as being part of the military environment? [If students acknowledge that there is acceptance, probe further on who they sense that from. Ask if it is part of the Academy “culture” or “military culture.” Have them explain how they learned the “culture.”]

- c. Let's go back to the earlier discussion of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment rates for men from the survey. You indicated they are [higher or lower] than what you might have expected. Who would you think are typically offenders? Where would you think such incidents are most likely to occur?
- d. I would like to end this section by asking for your perceptions of the cause of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment behaviors at the Academy.
  - i. With all the emphasis on prevention, why do they still occur?
  - ii. Does pornography or sexting play a role?
  - iii. What more can be done to prevent unwanted sexual contact? Sexual harassment?

OK, now let's switch gears and talk about reporting unwanted sexual contact.

**Time for Question 2:  
10 minutes**

## **2. Reporting**

- a. Please go to the table on page 5 of your handout. Here at the Air Force Academy there were 21 unrestricted reports of unwanted sexual contact last year, 31 restricted reports, and 7 informal sexual harassment complaints filed. These represent only about one third [11.2% of 937 total women and 1.7% of 3,295 men = 105+56 = 161 potential reports] of the reports that could have been filed based on the survey results. Why do you think the majority of students who experienced unwanted sexual contact choose not to report the incident? Why did they choose not to report sexual harassment?
- b. What more can be done to encourage reporting? What barriers could be eliminated? Does the competitive nature of the Academy inhibit people from reporting?
- c. Many students who experience unwanted sexual contact say they did not report it but "Took care of it myself." What does that mean to you? What actions would one take?
- d. Do you think someone would be more or less inclined to report unwanted sexual contact that involved an offender of the same sex for example, male-on-male or female-on-female? Sexual harassment?

We have talked a while about unwanted sexual contact and reporting. Now I want to talk to you a little about the locations where it might occur.

**Time for Question 3:  
10 minutes**

### **3. Places where unwanted sexual contact is most likely to occur**

- a. Most victims of unwanted sexual contact indicated on the survey that the incident occurred on Academy grounds. Where would the most likely place be at this Academy for an incident to occur?
- e. How could these places be made safer?
- f. Are there other locations, such as field settings, sports team trips, club trips, on ship, or at another military location where students might be more vulnerable to unwanted sexual contact? Please describe.
- g. Are students on summer training programs away from campus more vulnerable? How could these places or experiences be made safer?

Let's turn our discussion specifically to multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact for a few minutes.

**Time for Question 4:  
10 minutes**

### **4. Multiple experiences of sexual assault**

- a. Survey results show that victims often experience more than one incident of unwanted sexual contact. Do you think behaviors tend to progress, such as experiences of touching first, followed by more aggressive behaviors?
- b. Do you think someone would be more inclined to report or seek help after experiencing one type of behaviors more than others? [If asked for clarification, ask if someone would be more likely to report completed sex versus attempted sex or touching?]
- c. If a victim were to experience multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact, do you think it would be more likely to be from the same offender/perpetrator or different ones? Do you think a perpetrator who assaults one person would also be likely to assault someone else?
- d. Is there a sense that perpetrators have a good chance of getting away with unwanted sexual contact, hence they repeat their actions? Are perpetrators getting away with these behaviors because victims do not report it or perpetrators are not charged and punished?

Let's discuss leadership's response to unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment for a moment.

**Time for Question 5:  
10 minutes**

### **5. Leadership Perceptions**

- a. What do your faculty, coaches/activity leaders, and military staff [such as AOCs, senior NCOs] say to you about sexual assault and other unwanted behaviors? Can you give an example? [Depending on the response, ask if the discussions are helpful or what they would like their leaders to say to them.]

- b. How well do faculty/staff lead by example? Do they say something when they witness a questionable behavior? Do they help set a standard or give the impression that a certain amount of “locker room talk” is acceptable?  
[Depending on the responses, probe for good or bad examples.]
- c. Do you think it is the responsibility of faculty/staff to address these issues? Do you see them as roles models? Who specifically [positions, not names]?
- d. Has your AOC ever discussed unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment with you? What kind of information was discussed? Was it helpful? Why? What would you like to hear from them?
- e. What does senior leadership say about unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment? How do you think they handle reported cases of unwanted sexual contact? Do you think leadership would react differently to same-sex unwanted sexual contact? How does leadership respond to instances of sexual harassment? [Probe for good and bad examples, or instances where behaviors are tolerated or overlooked.]
- f. In the past few months, have you noticed any new emphasis on unwanted sexual contact or sexual harassment? What has been done? Do you think these steps will make a difference? Do you think there will be any unintended consequences [if asked for examples, ask if the message was negatively received or made them angry]?
- g. Do you know the SARC/victims’ advocate? Would you talk to them about an incident of unwanted sexual contact? Why or why not?

Now let's turn our attention briefly to the topic of training at your Academy.

Time for Question 6:  
10 minutes

## 6. Training

- a. What type of training have you received this year in the prevention and response to unwanted sexual contact? Sexual harassment?
- b. When do you receive this training? Is the timing and location convenient for you?
- c. Who typically conducts the training? Are they effective trainers?
- d. What training did you consider to be the most effective this year?
- e. Did you learn anything this past year that you did not know before? What? Is there something you would like to know more about?
- f. [Seniors only and the mixed junior/senior session] Do you feel prepared to deal with issues of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment among

your subordinates when you enter active duty? What training was the most helpful? What could be done better to prepare you?

I would like to wrap up our session today with a couple of final questions.

Time for Question 7:  
10 minutes

## **7. Additional recommendations for addressing unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment**

- a. Do you think the Academy should do more to make counseling or Sexual Assault Prevention and Response resources available to students who experienced trauma prior to entering the military?
- b. As future leaders of the military, what would you do now in your cadet role to address the problem of unwanted sexual contact? Sexual harassment?
- c. Do you believe it would be productive to have a Cadet "Dignity and Respect Code," much like the Honor Code, in order to instill these values in the cadet system?
- d. What else can you tell us about unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment at the Academy? What did we not ask that we should have?

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group. As I mentioned at the beginning, we will treat all of your comments anonymously. There is no attribution to any of you for the specific comments you made today. Please also respect that non-attribution when you leave here today. Our goal is to provide the best data possible and you have helped us greatly today with your comments and insights.

One last comment – on the last page of the handout you will see a list of resources available to you if you would like to follow up with us or have any questions. It also lists Academy resources if you would like to talk further to someone about this study or any experiences you might have had with unwanted gender-related behaviors.

Thank you again for your participation.



## **Appendix J. USAFA Cadet Handout**



**2013 Service Academy  
Gender Relations Focus  
Group  
U.S. Air Force Academy**

**Handout for Cadet  
Participants**





## ***Purpose***

We have asked you to be here with us to help us investigate issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response. You might recall that in the spring of last year students at your Academy were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey on these topics. This year, a series of focus groups are being conducted to provide additional information to DoD and Academy leadership. Similar focus groups are being conducted at all three DoD Service Academies as well as the U.S. Coast Guard Academy and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

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### ***Ground Rules for Discussion***

Thank you in advance for participating in this important focus group. We will follow a few ground rules for the focus group:

- Please respect each other's opinions. We know you will have different perspectives on issues covered in this focus group. We want to hear those views—that's why we are here today. So there are no right or wrong statements or opinions.
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### ***Discussion Resources***

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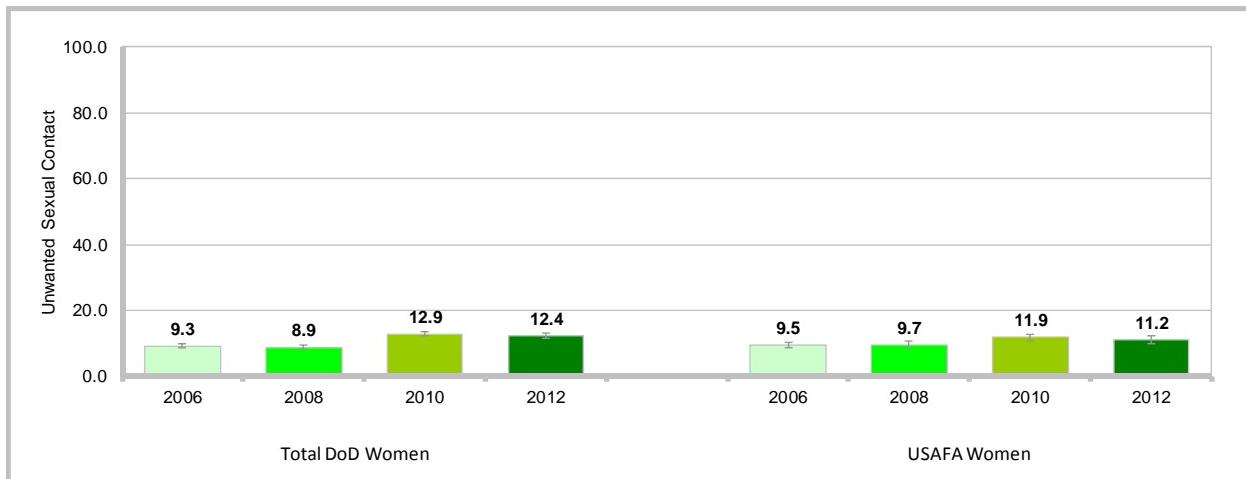
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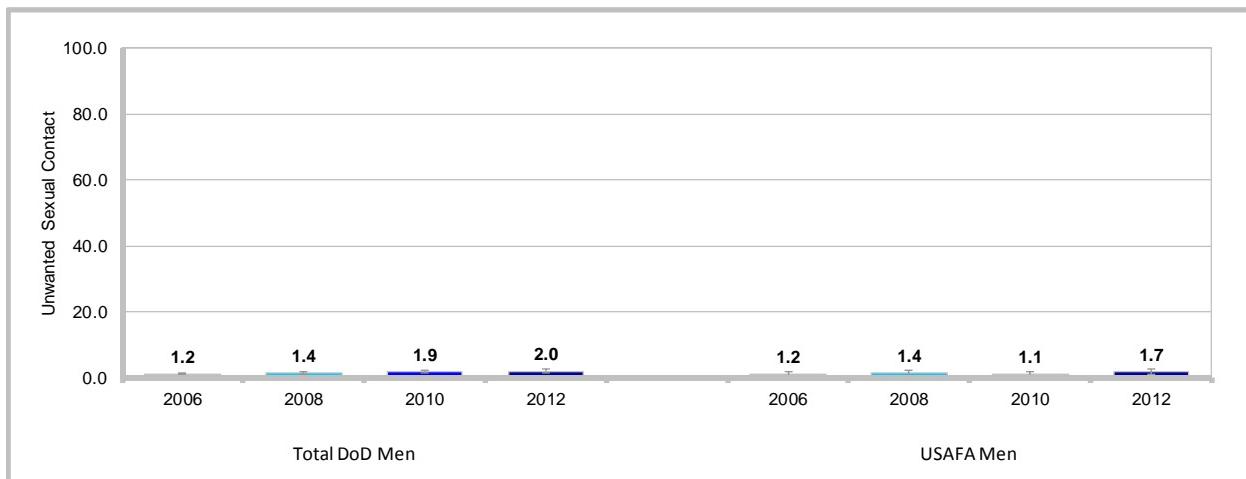
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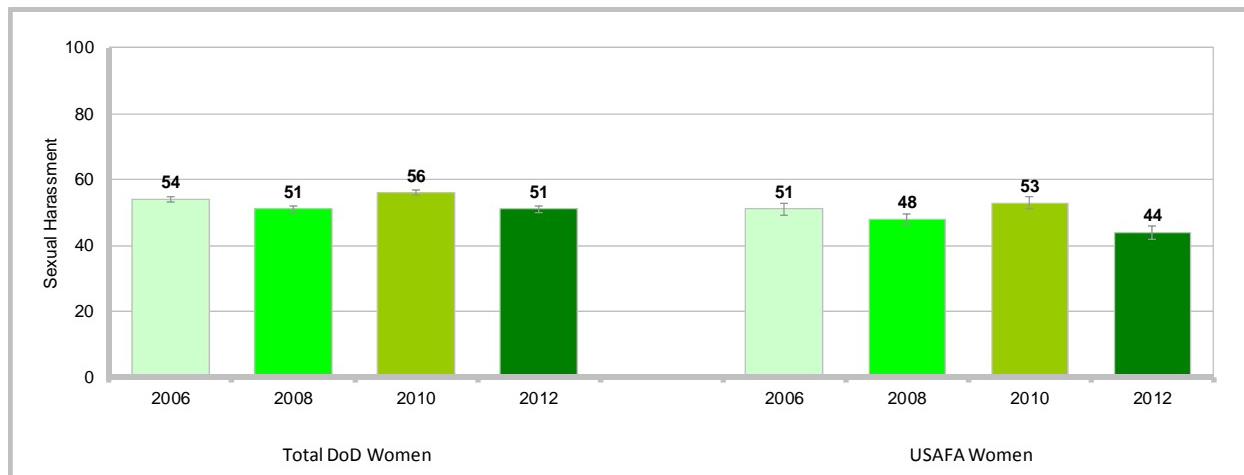
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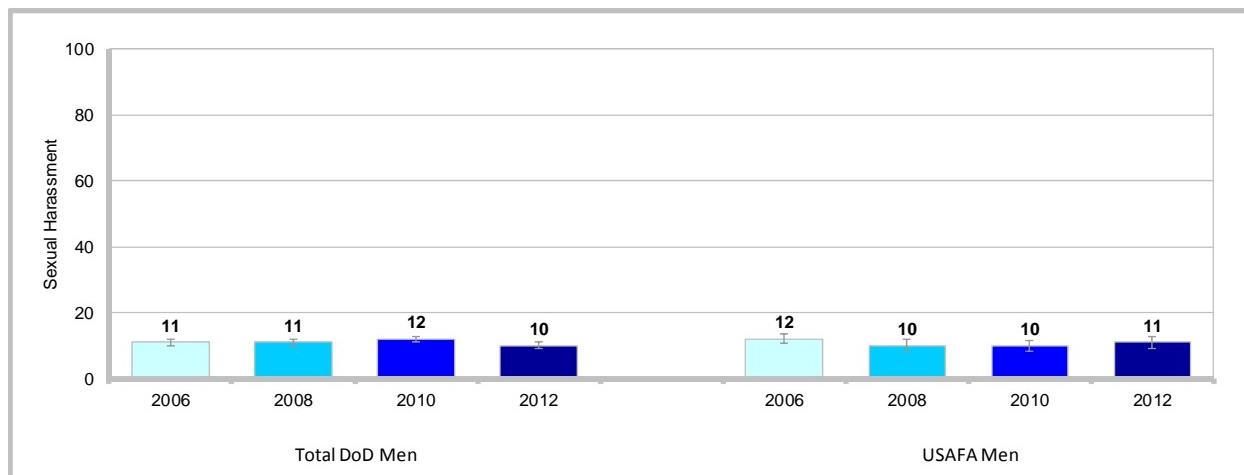
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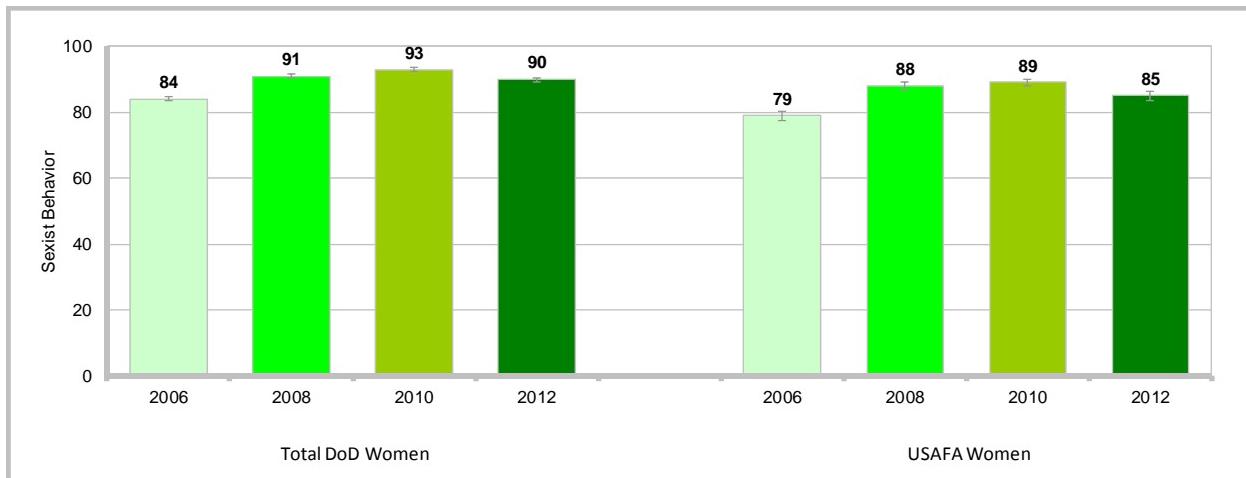
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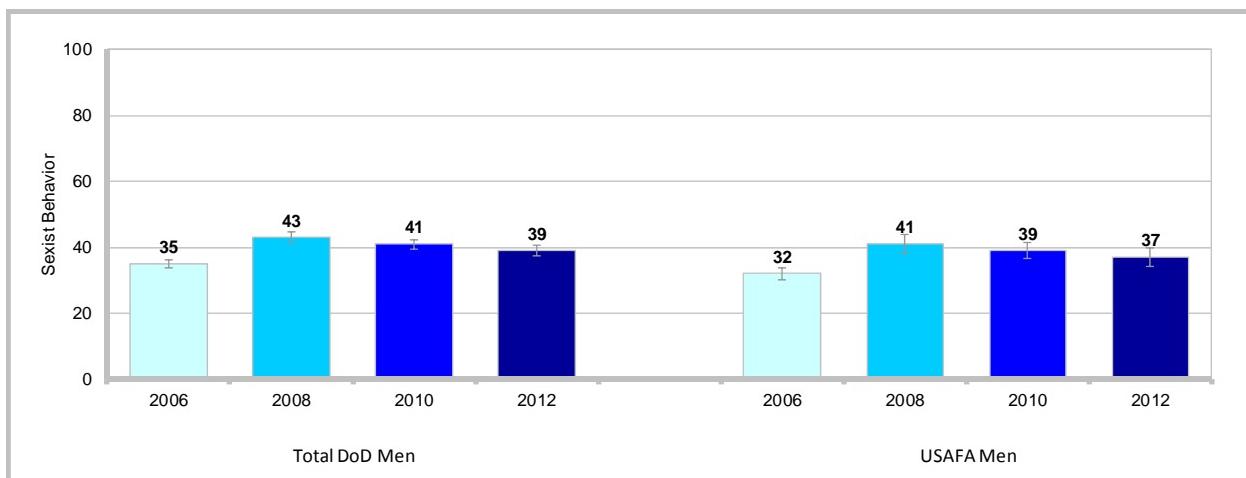
### 4. Sexual Harassment Rates for Men



## 5. Sexist Behavior Rates for Women



## 6. Sexist Behavior Rates for Men



## 7. Number of incidents reported in the past year

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If you feel uncomfortable or uneasy after participating in the focus group, and/or if you are a survivor of sexual assault, or have experienced sexual harassment or stalking, we strongly encourage you to contact the following resources that are available to you:

USAFA Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) Teresa Beasley  
(24 Hrs) 333-SARC (7272)

USAFA Peak Performance Center 333-2107 (Duty Hrs)/ (After Duty Hrs) Please contact your Squadron PEER and they will contact the on-call PPC Provider

USAFA Cadet Chaplain's Office 333-2636 (Duty Hrs) / (After Duty Hrs) Please contact the Command Post 333-2633 and they will contact the on-call Chaplain

(USAFA SCN 11-2)

**Appendix K.**

**USAFA Faculty, Athletic Staff, and Military**

**Cadre Focus Group Guide**



## 2013 Faculty/Activity/Military Focus Group Guide

### Introduction to the Faculty/Activity/Military Focus Group

Good morning/afternoon. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am with the Defense Manpower Data Center. My colleagues with me this morning/afternoon are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ also with DMDC. We have asked you to be here with us to help us investigate issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response. You might recall that last year students at your Academy were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey on these topics. This year, as was done two years ago, a series of focus groups are being conducted to provide information to DoD and Academy leadership. This year is the first year we have invited members of the faculty, athletic and activity staffs, and military cadre to participate. Similar focus groups are being conducted at all three DoD Service Academies, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

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- This is the first year we have invited members of the faculty, athletic and activity staffs, and military cadre to participate. Because you interact with the students, we believe you are in a position to share valuable insights with us on these important issues. We do not want to discuss any specific cases of sexual assault or sexual harassment. We do want to discuss issues in general so we can provide guidance to leadership to create the best environment possible for you.

I want to thank you in advance for participating in this important focus group and go over a few ground rules for the focus group:

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- Any questions?

On the next several pages of your handout are results from the 2012 survey that we will use as part of the discussion today. I will call your attention to the specific item as we reach that part of the discussion.

Please note that the results I will share with you come from the 2012 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey. This survey was conducted in the spring of 2012 with results reported to your Academy and Service leadership as well as the House and Senate Armed Services Committees in December 2012. Our report is available at the Web site shown if you are interested.

I have several questions to ask you today, with a few subtopics in each. I will watch the time so we will be able to cover all questions by the end of this session at [give specific end time].

Let's begin our discussion today with some results of the survey on sexual assault and sexual harassment. Please turn to page 3 of your handout. Here you will see some of the results from our 2012 survey that we will discuss today.

**Time for Question 1:  
15 minutes**

## **1. Perceptions about unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment**

- a. Let's start the discussion by discussing the rates for unwanted sexual contact from the 2012 survey. [Ice breaker question] Are you familiar with these findings?
  - i. For women, the rate here at the Air Force Academy was 11.2% in 2012. For men it was 1.7%. You can also see the rates in past survey years as well as the average rates at the DoD Academies. Do these rates seem right to you based on your knowledge about the cadet/midshipman corps/wing/brigade? Too high, too low? Please discuss.

- ii. Please note the description of sexual harassment and sexist behavior on page 4, then the rates on page 4 and 5. [Explain how sexual harassment is comprised of several types of behavior if they ask. And sexist behavior is based on gender, not sexual behaviors] For women, the sexual harassment rate here at the Air Force Academy was 44% in 2012. For men it was 11%. For women, the rate for sexist behavior was 85% in 2012. For men it was 37%. Do these rates seem right to you? Too high, too low? Please discuss.
- b. A finding from the survey suggests that people who experience unwanted sexual contact also tend to experience other unwanted behaviors, such as sexual harassment and sexist behavior. Take a look at the rates for sexual harassment on page 4. This is for all male and female cadets at this Academy. If we look at the rates for sexual harassment of just those men and women who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year, the rates for sexual harassment are higher at 88% for women and approximately 63% for men. I say approximately for men because there are too few here at the Air Force Academy to estimate accurately, so we used an average across the DoD Academies to get 63%. Look also at the rates for sexist behavior on page 5. For those who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year, sexist behavior was also experienced by 93% of the women and approximately 76% of the men.
- i. What do you think about the relationship between unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment? Sexist behavior?
  - ii. If someone gets away with sexual harassment or sexist comments, do you think they might move on to more serious behaviors like unwanted touching or sexual acts? Have you seen any examples of someone moving from one type of unwanted behavior to another?
  - iii. Do you think a student who had a previous experience of unwanted sexual contact, before entering the Academy or in previous years at the Academy, is someone more vulnerable for future assaults? How? How do you think they might feel about getting help? How would you advertise help for people with such a background? Is there anything that could be done to help people avoid the “spotlight” if they seek assistance?
  - iv. Do you sense attitudes of disrespect toward women at the Academy that might contribute to unwanted sexual contact or other unwanted gender-related behaviors? Are there any attitudes of disrespect toward men? Please describe. [Keep the discussion to gender issues if they start discussing racial, religious, political, or other groups.]
  - v. What can/should the Academy do to address sexist behavior or sexual harassment? Do you sense that students accept some of these

behaviors as being part of the military environment? [If participants acknowledge that there is acceptance, probe further on where students get that perception. Ask if it is part of the Academy “culture” or “military culture.” Have them explain how they define the “culture.”]

- c. Let's go back to the earlier discussion of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment rates for men from the survey. You indicated they are [higher or lower] than what you might have expected. Who would you think are typically offenders? Where would you think such incidents are most likely to occur?
- d. I would like to end this section by asking your perceptions of the cause of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment behaviors at the Academy?
  - i. With all the emphasis on prevention, why do they still occur?
  - ii. Does pornography or sexting play a role?
  - iii. What more can be done to prevent unwanted sexual contact? Sexual harassment?

OK, now let's switch gears and talk about roles and responsibilities with regard to unwanted sexual contact.

**Time for Question 2:  
10 minutes**

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

- a. What do you see as your role in helping reduce unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment? Do you discuss unwanted sexual contact prevention and response with your students? Do you discuss issues about sexual harassment with them?
- b. What resources and training do you receive to prepare you to discuss unwanted behaviors with students and to advise them when an incident occurs? What has worked well? What has not worked well? What training or resources would be helpful to you?
- c. Are you aware of instances where one of your students has experienced unwanted sexual contact or sexual harassment? [Do not discuss cases by name.] What would you do if a student came to you for advice about an incident of unwanted sexual contact they or a friend experienced?
- d. Has Academy senior leadership engaged you in discussions of unwanted sexual contact prevention and response? If yes, how so? If not, what information would you find useful to have?
- e. Is there anything that prevents you from being more effective in supporting messages about unwanted sexual contact prevention to the students?
- f. What is your opinion of how unwanted sexual contact cases are handled?

- g. Do you think leadership would react differently to same-sex unwanted sexual contact?

I would like to ask several questions now about the locations where unwanted sexual contact might occur.

Time for Question 3:  
10 minutes

**3. Places where unwanted sexual contact is most likely to occur**

- a. Most victims of unwanted sexual contact indicated on the survey that the incident occurred on Academy grounds. Where would the most likely place be at this Academy for an incident to occur?
- b. How could these places be made safer?
- c. Are there other locations, such as field settings, sports team trips, club trips, on ship, or at another military location where students might be more vulnerable to unwanted sexual contact? Please describe.
- d. Are students on summer training programs away from campus more vulnerable? How could these places or experiences be made safer?

Let's turn our discussion specifically to multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact for a few minutes.

Time for Question 4:  
10 minutes

**4. Multiple experiences of unwanted sexual contact**

- a. Survey results show that victims often experience more than one incident of unwanted sexual contact. Do you think behaviors tend to progress, such as experiences of touching first, followed by more aggressive behaviors?
- b. Do you think someone would be more inclined to report or seek help after experiencing one type of behaviors more than others? [If asked for clarification, ask if someone would be more likely to report completed sex versus attempted sex or touching?]
- c. If a victim were to experience multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact, do you think it would be more likely to be from the same offender/perpetrator or different ones? Do you think a perpetrator who assaults one person would also be likely to assault someone else?
- d. Is there a sense that perpetrators have a good chance of getting away with unwanted sexual contact, hence they repeat their actions? Are perpetrators getting away with these behaviors because victims do not report it or perpetrators are not charged and punished?

Let's discuss briefly the phenomenon of victim blaming.

Time for Question 5:  
5 minutes

## **5. Victim Blaming**

- a. It is not uncommon for people to blame a victim for an incident of unwanted sexual contact saying things like "she led him on" or "she was trying to avoid getting into trouble herself for an offense, like underage drinking."
- b. Do you ever hear those comments? How do you react to such comments?
- c. Do you hear the same kind of "victim blaming" comments when the victim is a male? If not, why do you suppose there is a difference?"
- d. What can be done to address victim blaming?

Now let's discuss interactions with the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response staff here at the Academy.

**Time for Question 6:  
5 minutes**

## **6. Interactions with SAPR Staff**

- a. Do you interact with the professional unwanted sexual contact or sexual harassment staff? What is the nature of the interaction?
- b. What is your opinion about the programs for prevention and response?
- c. What is your opinion of the training the students receive in sexual harassment and unwanted sexual contact prevention and response? What do they tell you about the training? Is it effective? How could it be improved?
- d. What would work better to reach students and help them take the training seriously? Do you see instances where cadet leaders deal effectively with inappropriate behaviors based on the training they received?
- e. Do you think the training adequately prepares the students to respond to a unwanted sexual contact once they graduate? How could it be improved?

I want to ask you a couple of quick questions about potential cultural change.

**Time for Question 7:  
10 minutes**

## **7. Cultural Change**

- a. One way some people believe the Academy can improve unwanted sexual contact prevention and response is to change the culture and attitudes toward this issue. Do you agree? Please provide some examples of areas where change is needed.
- b. How can such a cultural change be made at this Academy? What elements need to be addressed?
- c. How does the Academy secure buy-in for change from the students? From leadership, faculty, and staff?

- d. Who should lead a cultural change? How would they do so?
- e. Do you think students treat each other with dignity and respect? What does it take to reach students about the importance of civility and proper behavior toward each other? Are these potential areas for cultural or attitudinal change?
- f. Are students prepared to lead other students with regard to preventing and responding to unwanted behaviors? Do they take that responsibility seriously?
- g. Do you believe it would be productive to have a Cadet "Dignity and Respect Code" much like the Honor Code, in order to instill these values in the cadet system?
- h. As preparation for future leadership positions, should issues such as proper behavior, unwanted sexual contact/harassment prevention, and response to unwanted sexual contact/harassment be made into graded coursework to ensure students take it seriously? Would that enhance accountability?
- i. Does the highly competitive nature of the Academy affect how students treat each other with respect to unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment? How does the competitive nature affect reporting of inappropriate behaviors?

Now I want to ask you a couple of quick questions about recent changes here at the Academy.

**Time for Question 8:  
5 minutes**

## **8. Recent Changes**

- a. Are you aware of any changes the Academy has implemented recently to address unwanted sexual contact or sexual harassment [such as tighter dormitory patrols]? Please describe.
- b. Are these changes effective? Did they go far enough? What else could be done?
- c. Is there a point where such actions become counter-productive [unintended consequences]?
- d. Have you seen changes in students over the years in terms of behaviors, attitudes, moral standards, and competitiveness? How do such changes relate to unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment behaviors?

I would like to wrap up our session today with a couple of final questions.

Time for Question 9:  
5 minutes

**9. Additional recommendations for addressing unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment**

- a. Do you think the Academy should do more to make counseling or Sexual Assault Prevention and Response resources available to students who experienced trauma prior to entering the military?
- b. What else can you tell us about unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment at the Academy? What did we not ask that we should have?

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group. As I mentioned at the beginning, we will treat all of your comments anonymously. There is no attribution to any of you for the specific comments you made today. Please also respect that non-attribution when you leave here today. Our goal is to provide the best data possible and you have helped us greatly today with your comments and insights.

One last comment – on the last page of the handout you will see a list of resources available to you if you would like to follow up with us or have any questions. It also lists Academy resources if you know of a student who would like to talk to someone about any experiences they might have had with unwanted gender-related behaviors.

Thank you again for your participation.

**Appendix L.**

**USAFA Faculty, Athletic Staff, and Military**

**Cadre Handout**



**2013 Service Academy  
Gender Relations Focus  
Group  
U.S. Air Force Academy**

**Handout for Faculty, Athletic  
Staff, Military Cadre  
Participants**

## ***Purpose***

We have asked you to be here with us to help us investigate issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response. You might recall that last year students at your Academy were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey on these topics. This year, as was done two years ago, a series of focus groups are being conducted to provide information to DoD and Academy leadership. This year is the first year we have invited members of the faculty, athletic and activity staffs, and military cadre to participate. Similar focus groups are being conducted at all three Service Academies. Focus groups will also be done at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy and U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

This is a voluntary focus group. The Academy staff member who invited you to participate in this session should have informed you that we would be discussing gender-related issues, including sexual assault and harassment, and asked if you were willing to participate. If you prefer not to sit in on this focus group, you are free to leave or to sit quietly while others participate.

- Let's begin by talking about why we are doing the focus group. Congress directed the Secretary of Defense to conduct an annual assessment cycle of surveys and focus groups in alternating years on gender issues at each of the Academies. This is an opportunity for you and students to share your perceptions and recommendations directly with senior leaders.
- This is the first year we have invited members of the faculty, athletic and activity staffs, and military cadre to participate. Because you interact with the students, we believe you are in a position to share valuable insights with us on these important issues. We do not want to discuss any specific cases of sexual assault or sexual harassment. We do want to discuss issues in general so we can provide guidance to leadership to create the best environment possible for you.

### ***Ground Rules for Discussion***

Thank you in advance for participating in this important focus group. We will follow a few ground rules for the focus group:

- Please respect each other's opinions. We know you will have different perspectives on issues covered in this focus group. We want to hear those views—that's why we are here today. So there are no right or wrong statements or opinions.
- If you don't feel you have anything to contribute, there's no pressure for you to do so, and if you need to leave during the session, please do so in a quiet manner, so as not to disrupt the group.
- I will lead the discussion and our recorder will be helping us to take notes. We will record comments but will not record names or other identifying information. Only an analysis and summary of the data will go in our report. If you would like to see how comments are being recorded, please examine what is being typed.
- This is a non-attribution session. Although we are taking notes on your comments and suggestions, we will not share anything outside this room that can be attributed to any one of you specifically. We ask your cooperation in protecting the privacy of the comments made within this session, so please do not discuss the focus group proceedings after you leave.
- Please keep the crosstalk to a minimum. Let me be the focal point for questions and discussion.
- Any questions?

### ***Discussion Resources***

On the next several pages are results from the 2012 survey that we will use as part of the discussion today. I will call your attention to the specific item as we reach that part of the discussion.

Please note that the results I will share with you come from the 2012 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey. This survey was conducted in the spring of 2012 with results reported to your Academy and Service leadership as well as the House and Senate Armed Services Committees in December 2012.

To assure statistically reliability of the survey results, we surveyed all of the female cadets and a sample of approximately one-third of male cadets. The full report is available on the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPRO) Web site at:

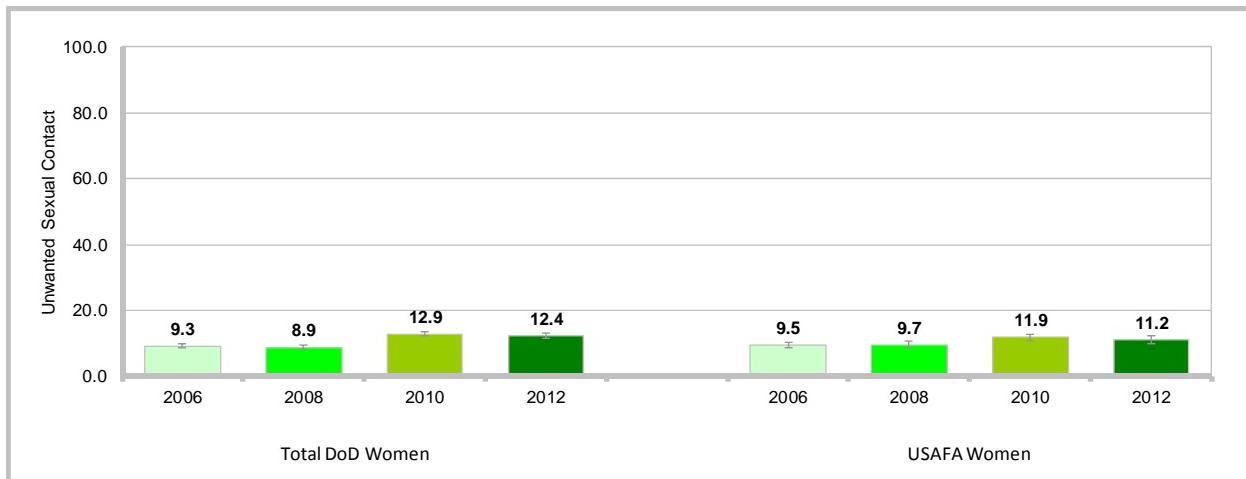
[http://www.sapr.mil/media/pdf/reports/FINAL\\_APY\\_11-12\\_MSA\\_Report.pdf](http://www.sapr.mil/media/pdf/reports/FINAL_APY_11-12_MSA_Report.pdf)



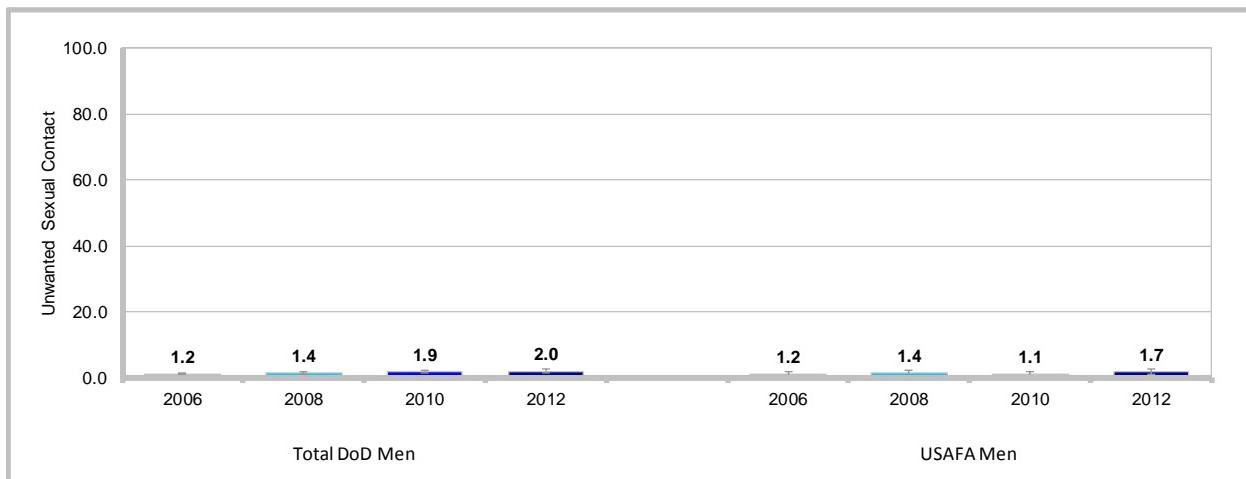
## Unwanted Sexual Contact

Unwanted sexual contact consists of a range of unwanted behaviors including unwanted sexual touching, attempted sex, and completed sex.

### 1. Unwanted Sexual Contact Rates for Women



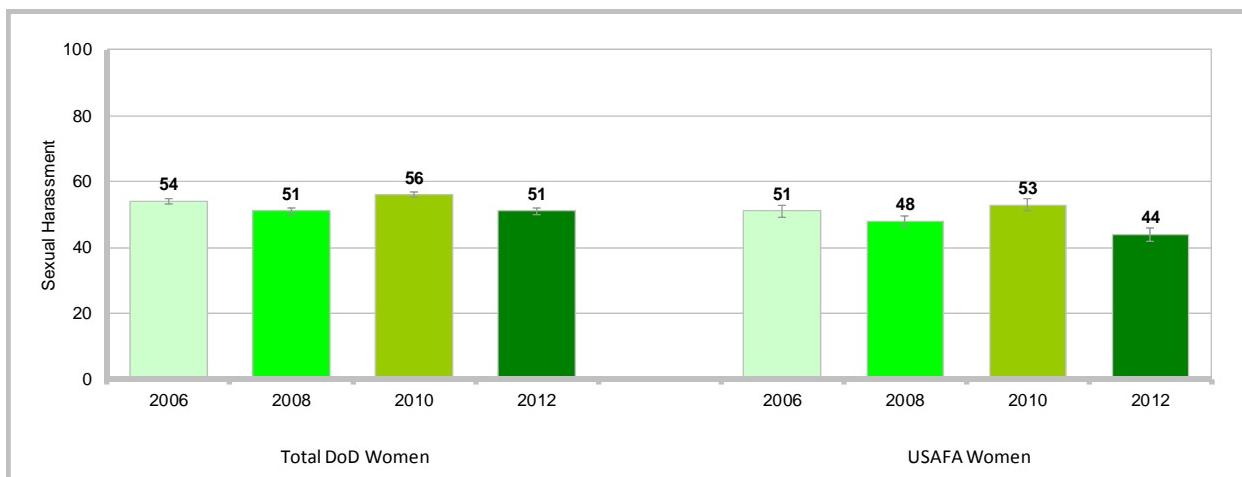
### 2. Unwanted Sexual Contact Rates for Men



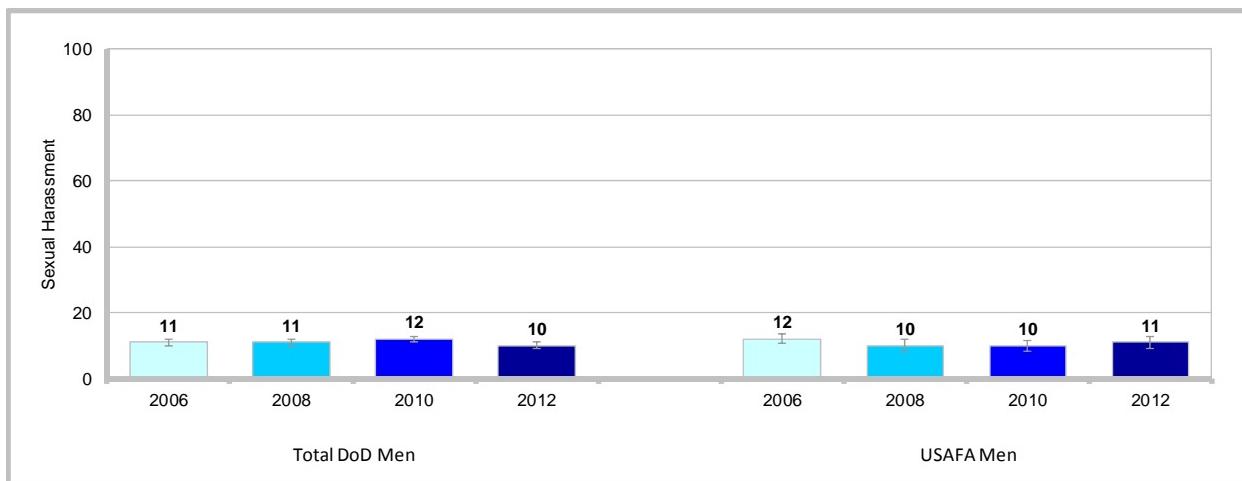
## Sexual Harassment and Sexist Behavior

- **Sexual harassment**
  - Crude/Offensive Behavior –verbal/nonverbal behaviors of a sexual nature that were offensive or embarrassing
  - Unwanted Sexual Attention –unwanted attempts to establish a sexual relationship
  - Sexual Coercion –classic *quid pro quo* instances of special treatment or favoritism conditioned on sexual cooperation
  - One “labeling” item that asks if the student considers any of the selected behaviors to be sexual harassment
- **Sexist behavior**
  - Verbal/nonverbal behaviors that convey insulting, offensive, and/or condescending attitudes based on one’s gender

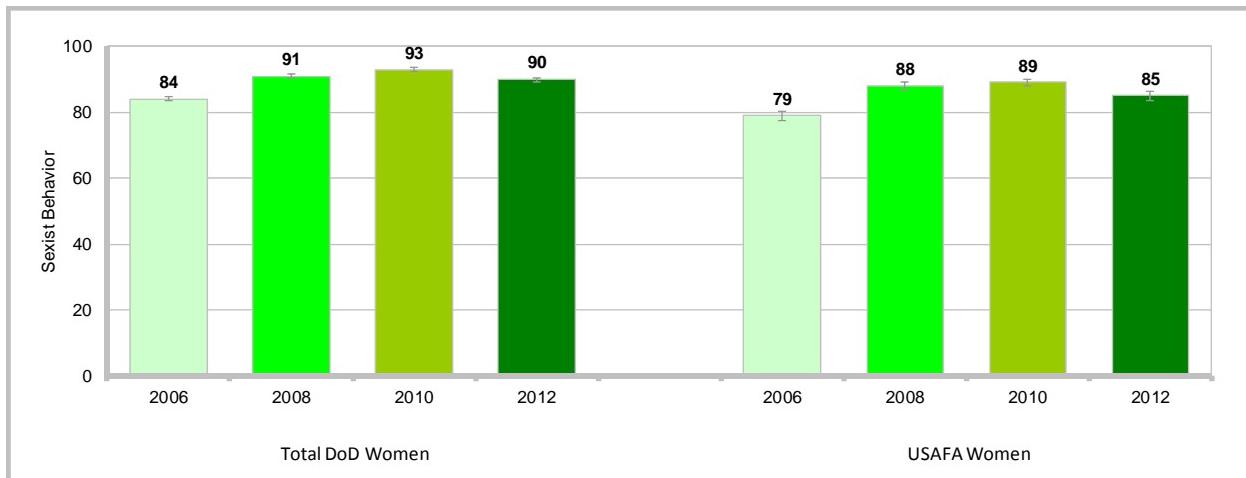
### 3. Sexual Harassment Rates for Women



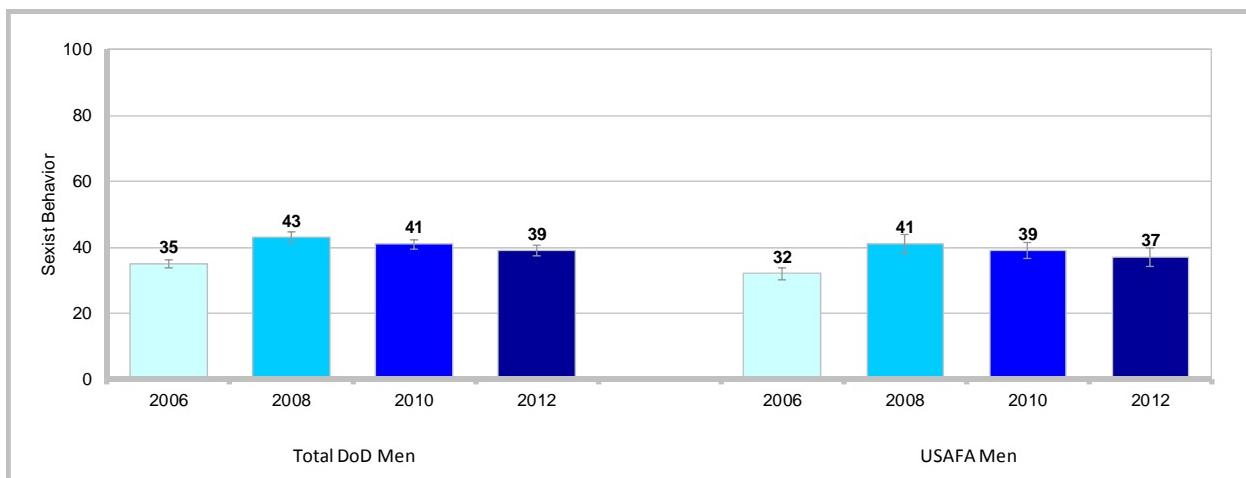
### 4. Sexual Harassment Rates for Men



## 5. Sexist Behavior Rates for Women



## 6. Sexist Behavior Rates for Men



## 7. Number of incidents reported in the past year

Type of Report	Number of Reports
Sexual Assault – Unrestricted	21
Sexual Assault – Restricted	31
Sexual Harassment – Informal Complaints	7



We appreciate your participation in this focus group. In the event you would like to discuss issues related to the focus group with someone from DMDC during (or after) our visit to the U.S. Air Force Academy, please contact Ms. Kristin Williams at 571-372-1033 or DSN 372-1033.

If you wish to provide feedback regarding the focus group process or the focus group content, please send us an e-mail at: SA-Survey@mail.mil. If you know of others who might like to contact a member of the DMDC team, please share this information with them. You may also use the Department of Defense SAFE Hotline at 877-995-5247 to report abuse of authority, mismanagement, fraud, and waste.

If you feel uncomfortable or uneasy after participating in the focus group, and/or if you are a survivor of sexual assault, or have experienced sexual harassment or stalking, we strongly encourage you to contact the following resources that are available to you:

USAFA Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) Teresa Beasley  
(24 Hrs) 333-SARC (7272)

USAFA Peak Performance Center 333-2107 (Duty Hrs)/ (After Duty Hrs) Please contact your Squadron PEER and they will contact the on-call PPC Provider

USAFA Cadet Chaplain's Office 333-2636 (Duty Hrs) / (After Duty Hrs) Please contact the Command Post 333-2633 and they will contact the on-call Chaplain

(USAFA SCN 11-2)

**Appendix M.**  
**USCGA Cadet Focus Group Guide**



## 2013 Student Focus Group Guide

### Introduction to the Focus Group

Good morning/afternoon. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am with the Defense Manpower Data Center. My colleagues with me this morning/afternoon are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ also with DMDC. We have asked you to be here with us to help us investigate issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response. You might recall that last year students at your Academy were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey on these topics. This year, as was done two years ago, a series of focus groups are being conducted to provide information to DoD and Academy leadership. Similar focus groups are being conducted at all three DoD Service Academies and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

**Time for briefing  
and introductions:  
5 minutes**

This is a **voluntary focus group**. The Academy staff member who invited you to participate in this session should have informed you that we would be discussing gender-related issues, including sexual assault and harassment, and asked if you were willing to participate. If you prefer not to sit in on this focus group, you are free to leave or to sit quietly while others participate.

I have provided each of you with a handout. Please turn to page 1. You can follow along while I share with you the purpose for this focus group and the ground rules we will follow.

- Let's begin by talking about why we are doing the focus group. While the press and others may claim to know what is going on at the Academies, members of Congress and your senior leaders want to hear directly from you about the issues that affect you. Congress directed the Secretary of Defense to conduct an annual assessment cycle of surveys and focus groups in alternating years on gender issues at each of the Academies. While this Congressional requirement does not cover the Coast Guard Academy, your leadership asked to participate because they know these are important issues. This is an opportunity for you to share your perceptions and recommendations directly with senior leaders.
- Focus group participants sometimes say "I have not experienced any of these behaviors, so why should I stay for this session?" The purpose of this focus group is to understand these issues at your Academy. You're the experts on what it's like to go to the Academies and we want to hear your opinion about Academy life. It doesn't matter if you *have* or *have not* had gender-related experiences. We do not want to discuss your personal experiences with sexual assault and sexual harassment. We do want to discuss issues in general so we can provide guidance to leadership to create the best environment possible for you.

I want to thank you in advance for participating in this important focus group and go over a few ground rules for the focus group:

- Please respect each others' opinions. We know you will have different perspectives on issues covered in this focus group. We want to hear those views—that's why we are here today. So there are no right or wrong statements or opinions.
- If you don't feel you have anything to contribute, there's no pressure for you to do so, and if you need to leave during the session, please do so in a quiet manner, so as not to disrupt the group.
- I will lead the discussion and \_\_\_\_\_ will be helping us to take notes. We will record comments but will not record names or other identifying information. Only an analysis and summary of the data will go in our report. If you would like to see how comments are being recorded, please examine what \_\_\_\_\_ is typing.
- This is a non-attribution session. Although we are taking notes on your comments and suggestions, we will not share anything outside this room that can be attributed to any one of you specifically. We ask your cooperation in protecting the privacy of the comments made within this session, so please do not discuss the focus group proceedings after you leave.
- Please keep the crosstalk to a minimum. Let me be the focal point for questions and discussion.
- Any questions?

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Please note that the results I will share with you come from the 2012 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey. This survey was conducted in the spring of 2012 with results reported to your Academy and Service leadership as well as the House and Senate Armed Services Committees in December 2012. Our report is available at the Web site shown if you are interested.

I have several questions to ask you today, with a few subtopics in each. I will watch the time so we will be able to cover all questions by the end of this session at [give specific end time].

Let's begin our discussion today with some results of the survey on sexual assault and sexual harassment. Please turn to page 3 of your handout. Here you will see some of the results from our 2012 survey that we will discuss today.

**Time for Question 1:  
15 minutes**

## **1. Perceptions about sexual assault and sexual harassment**

- a. Let's start the discussion by discussing the rates for unwanted sexual contact from the 2012 survey. [Ice breaker question] Do you recall taking the survey last spring?
  - i. For women, the rate here at the Coast Guard Academy was 9.8% in 2012. For men it was 0.7%. You can also see the rates in past survey years as well as the average rates at the DoD Academies. Do these

unwanted sexual contact rates seem right to you? Too high, too low? Please discuss.

- ii. Please note the description of sexual harassment and sexist behavior on page 4, then the rates on page 4 and 5. [Explain how sexual harassment is comprised of several types of behavior if they ask. And sexist behavior is based on gender, not sexual behaviors] For women, the sexual harassment rate here at the Coast Guard Academy was 40% in 2012. For men it was 10%. For women, the rate for sexist behavior was 77% in 2012. For men it was 40%. Do these rates seem right to you? Too high, too low? Please discuss.
  - b. A finding from the survey suggests that people who experience unwanted sexual contact also tend to experience other unwanted behaviors, such as sexual harassment and sexist behavior. Take a look at the rates for sexual harassment on page 4. This is for all men and women at this Academy. If we look at the rates for sexual harassment of just those men and women who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year, the rates for sexual harassment are higher at 72% for women and approximately 63% for men. I say approximately for men because there are too few here at the Coast Guard Academy to estimate accurately, so we used an average across the DoD Academies to get 63%. Look also at the rates for sexist behavior on page 5. For those who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year, sexist behavior was also experienced by 100% of the women and approximately 76% of the men.
- i. What do you think about the relationship between sexual assault and sexual harassment? Sexist behavior?
  - ii. If someone gets away with sexual harassment or sexist comments, do you think they might move on to more serious behaviors like unwanted touching or sexual acts? Have you seen any examples of someone moving from one type of unwanted behavior to another?
  - iii. Do you sense attitudes of disrespect toward women at the Academy that might contribute to sexual assault or other unwanted gender-related behaviors? Are there any attitudes of disrespect toward men? Please describe. [Keep the discussion to gender issues if they start discussing racial, religious, political, or other groups.]
  - iv. What can/should the Academy do to address sexist behavior or sexual harassment? Do you sense that there is acceptance of some of these behaviors as being part of the military environment? [If students acknowledge that there is acceptance, probe further on who they sense that from. Ask if it is part of the Academy “culture” or “military culture.” Have them explain how they learned the “culture.”]

- c. Let's go back to the earlier discussion of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment rates for men from the survey. You indicated they are [higher or lower] than what you might have expected. Who would you think are typically offenders? Where would you think such incidents are most likely to occur?
- d. I would like to end this section by asking for your perceptions of the cause of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment behaviors at the Academy.
  - i. With all the emphasis on prevention, why do they still occur?
  - ii. Does pornography or sexting play a role?
  - iii. What more can be done to prevent unwanted sexual contact? Sexual harassment?

OK, now let's switch gears and talk about reporting unwanted sexual contact.

**Time for Question 2:  
10 minutes**

## **2. Reporting**

- a. Please go to the table on page 5 of your handout. Here at the Coast Guard Academy there were 7 unrestricted reports of unwanted sexual contact last year, no restricted reports, and no formal sexual harassment complaints filed. These represent only about 20% [9.8% of 307 total women and 0.7% of 697 men = 37 potential reports] of the reports that could have been filed based on the survey results. Why do you think the majority of students who experienced unwanted sexual contact choose not to report the incident? Why did they choose not to report sexual harassment?
- b. What more can be done to encourage reporting? What barriers could be eliminated? Does the competitive nature of the Academy inhibit people from reporting?
- c. Many students who experience unwanted sexual contact say they did not report it but "Took care of it myself." What does that mean to you? What actions would one take?
- d. Do you think someone would be more or less inclined to report unwanted sexual contact that involved an offender of the same sex for example, male-on-male or female-on-female? Sexual harassment?

We have talked a while about unwanted sexual contact and reporting. Now I want to talk to you a little about the locations where it might occur.

**Time for Question 3:  
10 minutes**

### **3. Places where unwanted sexual contact is most likely to occur**

- a. Most victims of unwanted sexual contact indicated on the survey that the incident occurred on Academy grounds. Where would the most likely place be at this Academy for an incident to occur?
- b. How could these places be made safer?
- c. Are there other locations, such as field settings, sports team trips, club trips, on ship, or at another military location where students might be more vulnerable to unwanted sexual contact? Please describe.
- d. Are students on summer training programs away from campus more vulnerable? How could these places or experiences be made safer?

Let's turn our discussion specifically to multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact for a few minutes.

**Time for Question 4:  
10 minutes**

### **4. Multiple experiences of sexual assault**

- a. Survey results show that victims often experience more than one incident of unwanted sexual contact. Do you think behaviors tend to progress, such as experiences of touching first, followed by more aggressive behaviors?
- b. Do you think someone would be more inclined to report or seek help after experiencing one type of behaviors more than others? [If asked for clarification, ask if someone would be more likely to report completed sex versus attempted sex or touching?]
- c. If a victim were to experience multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact, do you think it would be more likely to be from the same offender/perpetrator or different ones? Do you think a perpetrator who assaults one person would also be likely to assault someone else?
- d. Is there a sense that perpetrators have a good chance of getting away with unwanted sexual contact, hence they repeat their actions? Are perpetrators getting away with these behaviors because victims do not report it or perpetrators are not charged and punished?

Let's discuss leadership's response to unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment for a moment.

**Time for Question 5:  
10 minutes**

### **5. Leadership Perceptions**

- a. What do your faculty, coaches/activity leaders, and military staff [such as company officers, training NCOs] say to you about sexual assault and other unwanted behaviors? Can you give an example? [Depending on the response, ask if the discussions are helpful or what they would like their leaders to say to them.]

- b. How well do faculty/staff lead by example? Do they say something when they witness a questionable behavior? Do they help set a standard or give the impression that a certain amount of “locker room talk” is acceptable?  
[Depending on the responses, probe for good or bad examples.]
- c. Do you think it is the responsibility of faculty/staff to address these issues? Do you see them as roles models? Who specifically [positions, not names]?
- d. Has your Company Officer ever discussed unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment with you? What kind of information was discussed? Was it helpful? Why? What would you like to hear from them?
- e. What does senior leadership say about unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment? How do you think they handle reported cases of unwanted sexual contact? Do you think leadership would react differently to same-sex unwanted sexual contact? How does leadership respond to instances of sexual harassment? [Probe for good and bad examples, or instances where behaviors are tolerated or overlooked.]
- f. In the past few months, have you noticed any new emphasis on unwanted sexual contact or sexual harassment? What has been done? Do you think these steps will make a difference? Do you think there will be any unintended consequences [if asked for examples, ask if the message was negatively received or made them angry]?
- g. Do you know the SARC/victims’ advocate? [The SARC at USCGA is new – Shannon Norenberg] Would you talk to them about an incident of unwanted sexual contact? Why or why not?

Now let's turn our attention briefly to the topic of training at your Academy.

Time for Question 6:  
10 minutes

## 6. Training

- a. What type of training have you received this year in the prevention and response to unwanted sexual contact? Sexual harassment?
- b. When do you receive this training? Is the timing and location convenient for you?
- c. Who typically conducts the training? Are they effective trainers?
- d. What training did you consider to be the most effective this year?
- e. Did you learn anything this past year that you did not know before? What? Is there something you would like to know more about?

- f. [Seniors only and the mixed junior/senior session] Do you feel prepared to deal with issues of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment among your subordinates when you enter active duty? What training was the most helpful? What could be done better to prepare you?

I would like to wrap up our session today with a couple of final questions.

Time for Question 7:  
10 minutes

## **7. Additional recommendations for addressing unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment**

- a. Do you think the Academy should do more to make counseling or Sexual Assault Prevention and Response resources available to students who experienced trauma prior to entering the military?
- b. As future leaders of the military, what would you do now in your cadet role to address the problem of unwanted sexual contact? Sexual harassment?
- c. Do you believe it would be productive to have a Cadet "Dignity and Respect Code," much like the Honor Code, in order to instill these values in the cadet system?
- d. What else can you tell us about unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment at the Academy? What did we not ask that we should have?

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group. As I mentioned at the beginning, we will treat all of your comments anonymously. There is no attribution to any of you for the specific comments you made today. Please also respect that non-attribution when you leave here today. Our goal is to provide the best data possible and you have helped us greatly today with your comments and insights.

One last comment – on the last page of the handout you will see a list of resources available to you if you would like to follow up with us or have any questions. It also lists Academy resources if you would like to talk further to someone about this study or any experiences you might have had with unwanted gender-related behaviors.

Thank you again for your participation.



**Appendix N.  
USCGA Cadet Handout**



**2013 Service Academy  
Gender Relations Focus  
Group  
U.S. Coast Guard Academy**

**Handout for Cadet  
Participants**

## ***Purpose***

We have asked you to be here with us to help us investigate issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response. You might recall that in the spring of last year students at your Academy were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey on these topics. This year, a series of focus groups are being conducted to provide additional information to DoD and Academy leadership. Similar focus groups are being conducted at all three DoD Service Academies and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

This is a voluntary focus group. The Academy staff member who invited you to participate in this session should have informed you that we would be discussing gender-related issues, including sexual assault and harassment, and asked if you were willing to participate. If you prefer not to sit in on this focus group, you are free to leave or to sit quietly while others participate.

- Let's begin by talking about why we are doing the focus group. While the press and others may claim to know what is going on at the Academies, members of Congress and your senior leaders want to hear directly from you about the issues that affect you. Congress directed the Secretary of Defense to conduct an annual assessment cycle of surveys and focus groups in alternating years on gender issues at each of the Academies. This is an opportunity for you to share your perceptions and recommendations directly with senior leaders.
- Focus group participants sometimes say "I have not experienced any of these behaviors, so why should I stay for this session?" The purpose of this focus group is to understand these issues at your Academy. You're the experts on what it's like to go to the Academies and we want to hear your opinion about Academy life. It doesn't matter if you have or have not had gender-related experiences. We do not want to discuss your personal experiences with sexual assault and sexual harassment. We do want to discuss issues in general so we can provide guidance to leadership to create the best environment possible for you.

### ***Ground Rules for Discussion***

Thank you in advance for participating in this important focus group. We will follow a few ground rules for the focus group:

- Please respect each other's opinions. We know you will have different perspectives on issues covered in this focus group. We want to hear those views—that's why we are here today. So there are no right or wrong statements or opinions.
- If you don't feel you have anything to contribute, there's no pressure for you to do so, and if you need to leave during the session, please do so in a quiet manner, so as not to disrupt the group.
- I will lead the discussion and our recorder will be helping us to take notes. We will record comments but will not record names or other identifying information. Only an analysis and summary of the data will go in our report. If you would like to see how comments are being recorded, please examine what is being typed.
- This is a non-attribution session. Although we are taking notes on your comments and suggestions, we will not share anything outside this room that can be attributed to any one of you specifically. We ask your cooperation in protecting the privacy of the comments made within this session, so please do not discuss the focus group proceedings after you leave.
- Please keep the crosstalk to a minimum. Let me be the focal point for questions and discussion.
- Any questions?

### ***Discussion Resources***

On the next several pages are results from the 2012 survey that we will use as part of the discussion today. I will call your attention to the specific item as we reach that part of the discussion.

Please note that the results I will share with you come from the 2012 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey. This survey was conducted in the spring of 2012 with results reported to your Academy and Service leadership as well as the House and Senate Armed Services Committees in December 2012.

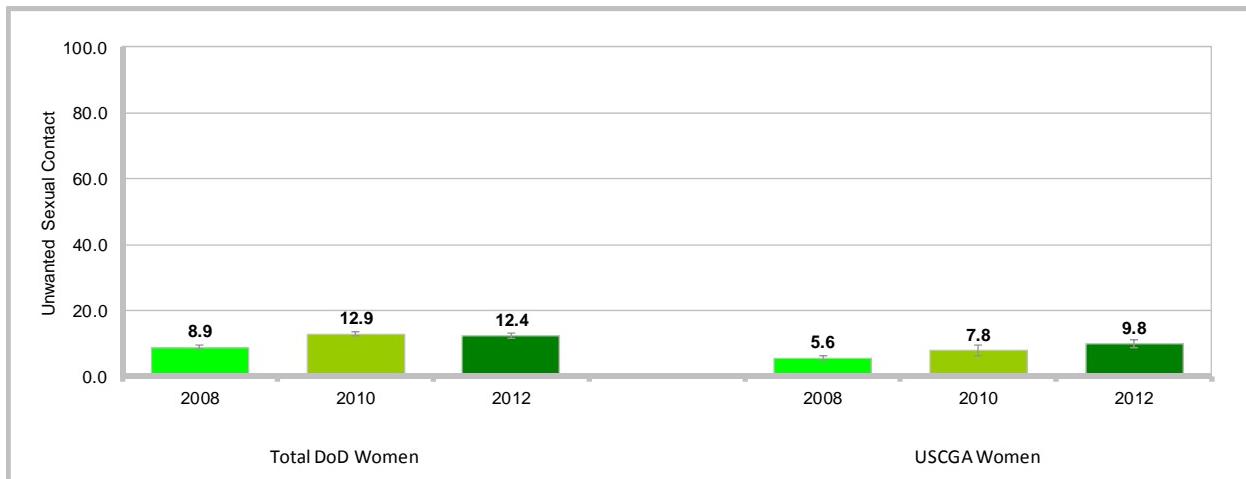
To assure statistically reliability of the survey results, we surveyed all of the cadets here at the Coast Guard Academy. The full report is available on the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPRO) Web site at: [http://www.sapr.mil/media/pdf/reports/FINAL\\_APY\\_11-12\\_MSA\\_Report.pdf](http://www.sapr.mil/media/pdf/reports/FINAL_APY_11-12_MSA_Report.pdf)



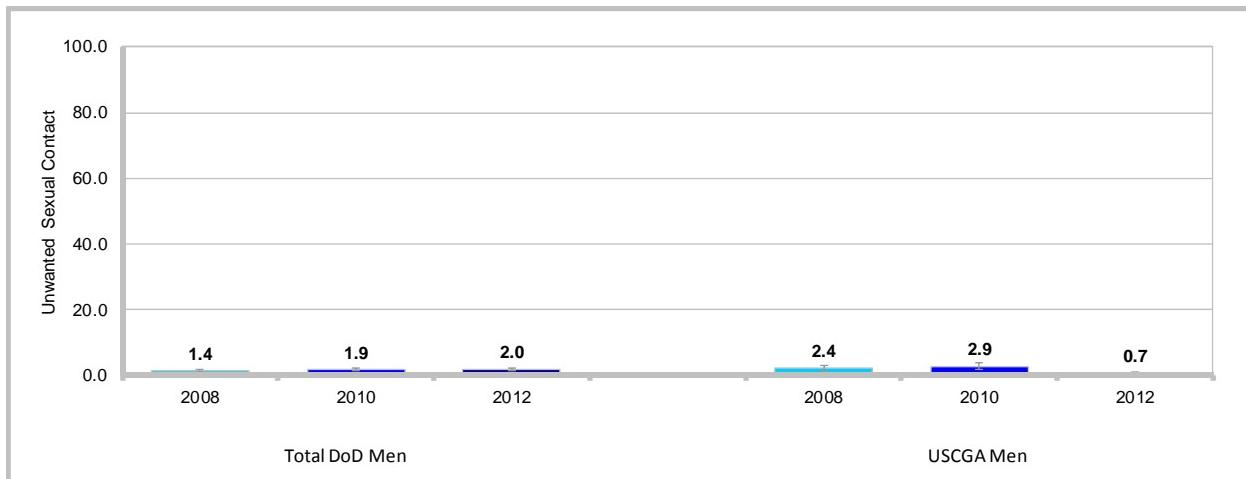
## Unwanted Sexual Contact

Unwanted sexual contact consists of a range of unwanted behaviors including unwanted sexual touching, attempted sex, and completed sex.

### 1. Unwanted Sexual Contact Rates for Women



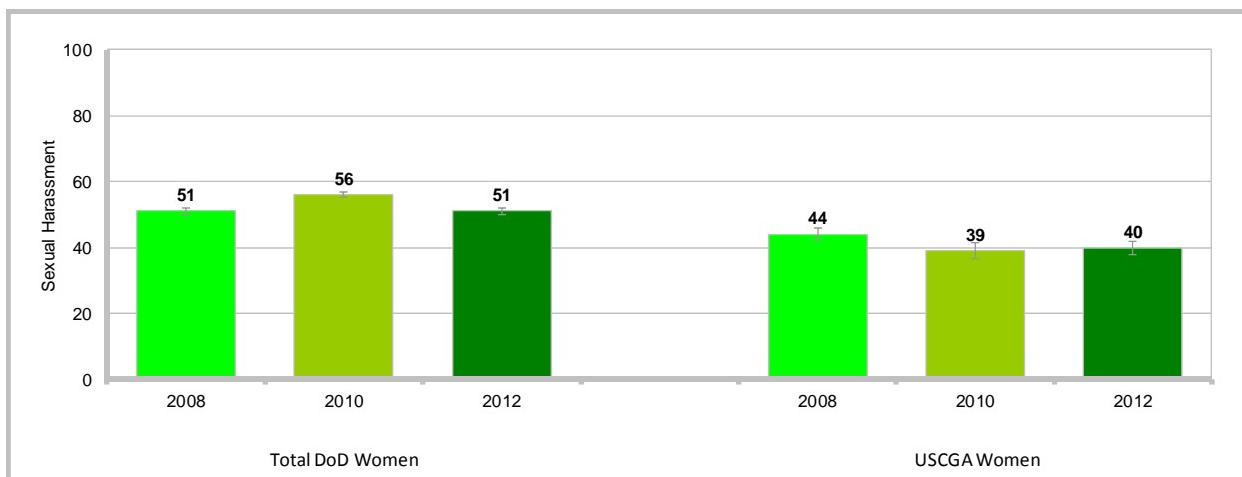
### 2. Unwanted Sexual Contact Rates for Men



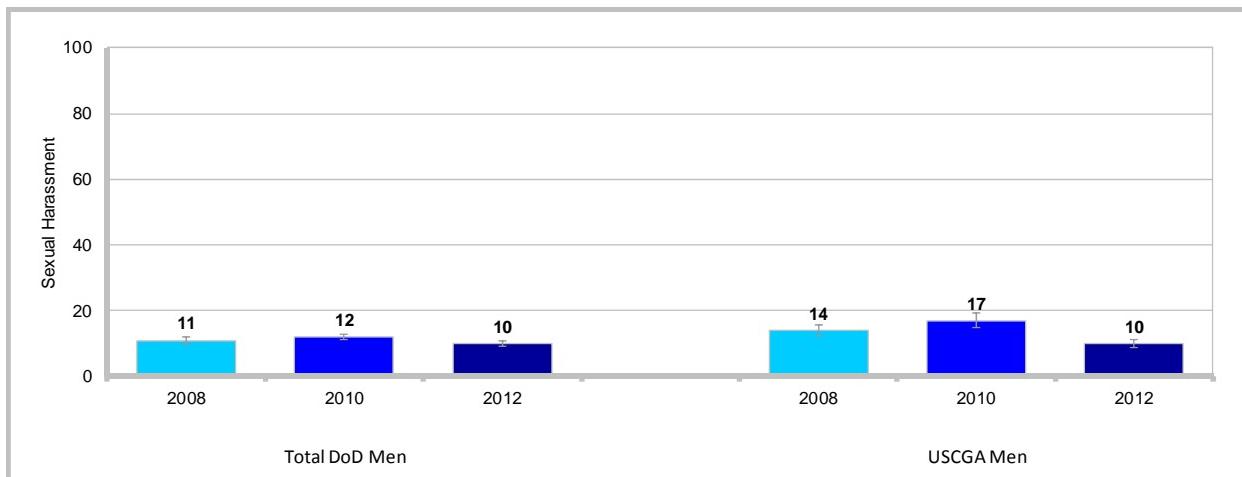
## Sexual Harassment and Sexist Behavior

- **Sexual harassment**
  - Crude/Offensive Behavior – verbal/nonverbal behaviors of a sexual nature that were offensive or embarrassing
  - Unwanted Sexual Attention – unwanted attempts to establish a sexual relationship
  - Sexual Coercion – classic *quid pro quo* instances of special treatment or favoritism conditioned on sexual cooperation
  - One “labeling” item that asks if the student considers any of the selected behaviors to be sexual harassment
- **Sexist behavior**
  - Verbal/nonverbal behaviors that convey insulting, offensive, and/or condescending attitudes based on one’s gender

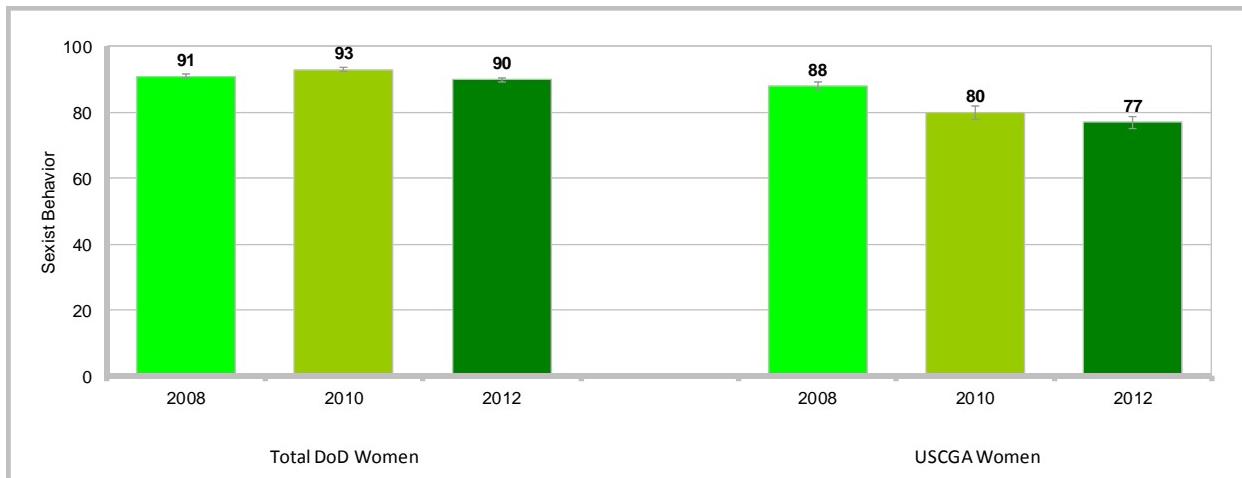
### 3. Sexual Harassment Rates for Women



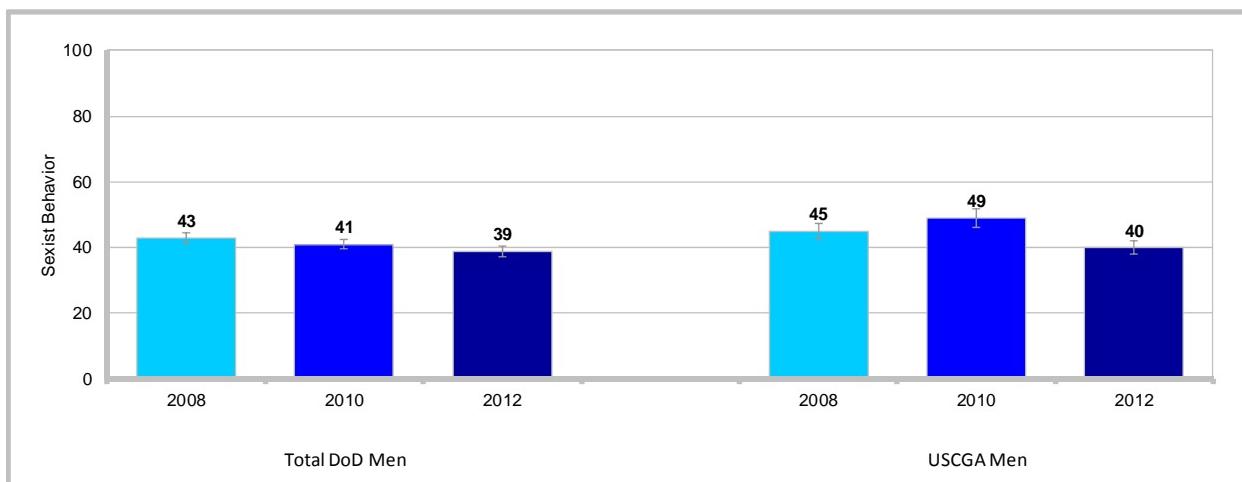
### 4. Sexual Harassment Rates for Men



## 5. Sexist Behavior Rates for Women



## 6. Sexist Behavior Rates for Men



## 7. Number of incidents reported in the past year

Type of Report	Number of Reports
Sexual Assault – Unrestricted	7



We appreciate your participation in this focus group. In the event you would like to discuss issues related to the focus group with someone from DMDC during (or after) our visit to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, please contact Ms. Kristin Williams at 571-372-1033 or DSN 372-1033.

If you wish to provide feedback regarding the focus group process or the focus group content, please send us an e-mail at: SA-Survey@mail.mil. If you know of others who might like to contact a member of the DMDC team, please share this information with them. You may also use the Department of Defense SAFE Hotline at 877-995-5247 to report abuse of authority, mismanagement, fraud, and waste.

If you feel uncomfortable or uneasy after participating in the focus group, and/or if you are a survivor of sexual assault, or have experienced sexual harassment or stalking, we strongly encourage you to contact the following resources that are available to you:

**Center for Counseling and Development:** (860) 444-8520 (0800-1630, M-F)  
Website:

<http://eduportal1/Divisions/Superintendent/Center%20for%20Counseling%20%20Develop/Pages/default.aspx>  
**SARC:** Shannon Norenberg (860) 625-1002 (24 hours)

**CASA Peer Advocacy Helpline:** (860) 625-0088 (24 hours)  
CASA Website: <http://eduportal1/sites/CASA/default.aspx>

Victims Advocacy Website: <http://eduportal1/sites/CASA/Lists/Victim%20Advocates/AllItems.aspx>  
Sexual Assault Crisis Center of Eastern Connecticut: (888) 999-5545 (24 hours)

Website: <http://saccec.org/>

**Cadet Chaplain's Office:** (860) 444-8480

**Appendix O.**

**USCGA Faculty, Athletic Staff, and Military  
Cadre Focus Group Guide**



## 2013 Faculty/Activity/Military Focus Group Guide

### Introduction to the Faculty/Activity/Military Focus Group

Good morning/afternoon. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am with the Defense Manpower Data Center. My colleagues with me this morning/afternoon are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ also with DMDC. We have asked you to be here with us to help us investigate issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response. You might recall that last year students at your Academy were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey on these topics. This year, as was done two years ago, a series of focus groups are being conducted to provide information to DoD and Academy leadership. This year is the first year we have invited members of the faculty, athletic and activity staffs, and military cadre to participate. Similar focus groups are being conducted at all three DoD Service Academies and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

**Time for briefing  
and introductions:  
5 minutes**

This is a **voluntary focus group**. The Academy staff member who invited you to participate in this session should have informed you that we would be discussing gender-related issues, including sexual assault and harassment, and asked if you were willing to participate. If you prefer not to sit in on this focus group, you are free to leave or to sit quietly while others participate.

I have provided each of you with a handout. Please turn to page 1. You can follow along while I share with you the purpose for this focus group and the ground rules we will follow.

- Let's begin by talking about why we are doing the focus group. Congress directed the Secretary of Defense to conduct an annual assessment cycle of surveys and focus groups in alternating years on gender issues at each of the Academies. While this Congressional requirement does not cover the Coast Guard Academy, your leadership asked to participate because they know these are important issues. This is an opportunity for you and students to share your perceptions and recommendations directly with senior leaders.
- This is the first year we have invited members of the faculty, athletic and activity staffs, and military cadre to participate. Because you interact with the students, we believe you are in a position to share valuable insights with us on these important issues. We do not want to discuss any specific cases of sexual assault or sexual harassment. We do want to discuss issues in general so we can provide guidance to leadership to create the best environment possible for you.

I want to thank you in advance for participating in this important focus group and go over a few ground rules for the focus group:

- Please respect each others' opinions. We know you will have different perspectives on issues covered in this focus group. We want to hear those views—that's why we are here today. So there are no right or wrong statements or opinions.
- If you don't feel you have anything to contribute, there's no pressure for you to do so, and if you need to leave during the session, please do so in a quiet manner, so as not to disrupt the group.
- I will lead the discussion and \_\_\_\_\_ will be helping us to take notes. We will record comments but will not record names or other identifying information. Only an analysis and summary of the data will go in our report. If you would like to see how comments are being recorded, please examine what \_\_\_\_\_ is typing.
- This is a non-attribution session. Although we are taking notes on your comments and suggestions, we will not share anything outside this room that can be attributed to any one of you specifically. We ask your cooperation in protecting the privacy of the comments made within this session, so please do not discuss the focus group proceedings after you leave.
- Please keep the crosstalk to a minimum. Let me be the focal point for questions and discussion.
- Any questions?

On the next several pages of your handout are results from the 2012 survey that we will use as part of the discussion today. I will call your attention to the specific item as we reach that part of the discussion.

Please note that the results I will share with you come from the 2012 Service Academy Gender Relations Survey. This survey was conducted in the spring of 2012 with results reported to your Academy and Service leadership as well as the House and Senate Armed Services Committees in December 2012. Our report is available at the Web site shown if you are interested.

I have several questions to ask you today, with a few subtopics in each. I will watch the time so we will be able to cover all questions by the end of this session at [give specific end time].

Let's begin our discussion today with some results of the survey on sexual assault and sexual harassment. Please turn to page 3 of your handout. Here you will see some of the results from our 2012 survey that we will discuss today.

**Time for Question 1:  
15 minutes**

## **1. Perceptions about unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment**

- a. Let's start the discussion by discussing the rates for unwanted sexual contact from the 2012 survey. [Ice breaker question] Are you familiar with these findings?
  - i. For women, the rate here at the Coast Guard Academy was 9.8% in 2012. For men it was 0.7%. You can also see the rates in past survey years as well as the average rates at the DoD Academies. Do these

rates seem right to you based on your knowledge about the cadet/midshipman corps/wing/brigade? Too high, too low? Please discuss.

- ii. Please note the description of sexual harassment and sexist behavior on page 4, then the rates on page 4 and 5. [Explain how sexual harassment is comprised of several types of behavior if they ask. And sexist behavior is based on gender, not sexual behaviors] For women, the sexual harassment rate here at the Coast Guard Academy was 40% in 2012. For men it was 10%. For women, the rate for sexist behavior was 77% in 2012. For men it was 40%. Do these rates seem right to you? Too high, too low? Please discuss.
- b. A finding from the survey suggests that people who experience unwanted sexual contact also tend to experience other unwanted behaviors, such as sexual harassment and sexist behavior. Take a look at the rates for sexual harassment on page 4. This is for all male and female cadets at this Academy. If we look at the rates for sexual harassment of just those men and women who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year, the rates for sexual harassment are higher at 72% for women and approximately 63% for men. I say approximately for men because there are too few here at the Coast Guard Academy to estimate accurately, so we used an average across the DoD Academies to get 63%. Look also at the rates for sexist behavior on page 5. For those who experienced unwanted sexual contact in the past year, sexist behavior was also experienced by 100% of the women and approximately 76% of the men.
  - i. What do you think about the relationship between unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment? Sexist behavior?
  - ii. If someone gets away with sexual harassment or sexist comments, do you think they might move on to more serious behaviors like unwanted touching or sexual acts? Have you seen any examples of someone moving from one type of unwanted behavior to another?
  - iii. Do you think a student who had a previous experience of unwanted sexual contact, before entering the Academy or in previous years at the Academy, is someone more vulnerable for future assaults? How? How do you think they might feel about getting help? How would you advertise help for people with such a background? Is there anything that could be done to help people avoid the “spotlight” if they seek assistance?
  - iv. Do you sense attitudes of disrespect toward women at the Academy that might contribute to unwanted sexual contact or other unwanted gender-related behaviors? Are there any attitudes of disrespect

toward men? Please describe. [Keep the discussion to gender issues if they start discussing racial, religious, political, or other groups.]

- v. What can/should the Academy do to address sexist behavior or sexual harassment? Do you sense that students accept some of these behaviors as being part of the military environment? [If participants acknowledge that there is acceptance, probe further on where students get that perception. Ask if it is part of the Academy “culture” or “military culture.” Have them explain how they define the “culture.”]
- c. Let’s go back to the earlier discussion of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment rates for men from the survey. You indicated they are [higher or lower] than what you might have expected. Who would you think are typically offenders? Where would you think such incidents are most likely to occur?
- d. I would like to end this section by asking your perceptions of the cause of unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment behaviors at the Academy?
  - i. With all the emphasis on prevention, why do they still occur?
  - ii. Does pornography or sexting play a role?
  - iii. What more can be done to prevent unwanted sexual contact? Sexual harassment?

OK, now let's switch gears and talk about roles and responsibilities with regard to unwanted sexual contact.

Time for Question 2:  
10 minutes

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

- a. What do you see as your role in helping reduce unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment? Do you discuss unwanted sexual contact prevention and response with your students? Do you discuss issues about sexual harassment with them?
- b. What resources and training do you receive to prepare you to discuss unwanted behaviors with students and to advise them when an incident occurs? What has worked well? What has not worked well? What training or resources would be helpful to you?
- c. Are you aware of instances where one of your students has experienced unwanted sexual contact or sexual harassment? [Do not discuss cases by name.] What would you do if a student came to you for advice about an incident of unwanted sexual contact they or a friend experienced?
- d. Has Academy senior leadership engaged you in discussions of unwanted sexual contact prevention and response? If yes, how so? If not, what information would you find useful to have?

- e. Is there anything that prevents you from being more effective in supporting messages about unwanted sexual contact prevention to the students?
- f. What is your opinion of how unwanted sexual contact cases are handled?
- g. Do you think leadership would react differently to same-sex unwanted sexual contact?

I would like to ask several questions now about the locations where unwanted sexual contact might occur.

**Time for Question 3:  
10 minutes**

### **3. Places where unwanted sexual contact is most likely to occur**

- a. Most victims of unwanted sexual contact indicated on the survey that the incident occurred on Academy grounds. Where would the most likely place be at this Academy for an incident to occur?
- b. How could these places be made safer?
- c. Are there other locations, such as field settings, sports team trips, club trips, on ship, or at another military location where students might be more vulnerable to unwanted sexual contact? Please describe.
- d. Are students on summer training programs away from campus more vulnerable? How could these places or experiences be made safer?

Let's turn our discussion specifically to multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact for a few minutes.

**Time for Question 4:  
10 minutes**

### **4. Multiple experiences of unwanted sexual contact**

- a. Survey results show that victims often experience more than one incident of unwanted sexual contact. Do you think behaviors tend to progress, such as experiences of touching first, followed by more aggressive behaviors?
- b. Do you think someone would be more inclined to report or seek help after experiencing one type of behaviors more than others? [If asked for clarification, ask if someone would be more likely to report completed sex versus attempted sex or touching?]
- c. If a victim were to experience multiple incidents of unwanted sexual contact, do you think it would be more likely to be from the same offender/perpetrator or different ones? Do you think a perpetrator who assaults one person would also be likely to assault someone else?
- d. Is there a sense that perpetrators have a good chance of getting away with unwanted sexual contact, hence they repeat their actions? Are perpetrators

getting away with these behaviors because victims do not report it or perpetrators are not charged and punished?

Let's discuss briefly the phenomenon of victim blaming.

Time for Question 5:  
5 minutes

### 5. Victim Blaming

- a. It is not uncommon for people to blame a victim for an incident of unwanted sexual contact saying things like "she led him on" or "she was trying to avoid getting into trouble herself for an offense, like underage drinking."
- b. Do you ever hear those comments? How do you react to such comments?
- c. Do you hear the same kind of "victim blaming" comments when the victim is a male? If not, why do you suppose there is a difference?"
- d. What can be done to address victim blaming?

Now let's discuss interactions with the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response staff here at the Academy.

Time for Question 6:  
5 minutes

### 6. Interactions with SAPR Staff

- a. Do you interact with the professional unwanted sexual contact or sexual harassment staff? What is the nature of the interaction?
- b. What is your opinion about the programs for prevention and response?
- c. What is your opinion of the training the students receive in sexual harassment and unwanted sexual contact prevention and response? What do they tell you about the training? Is it effective? How could it be improved?
- d. What would work better to reach students and help them take the training seriously? Do you see instances where cadet leaders deal effectively with inappropriate behaviors based on the training they received?
- e. Do you think the training adequately prepares the students to respond to a unwanted sexual contact once they graduate? How could it be improved?

I want to ask you a couple of quick questions about potential cultural change.

Time for Question 7:  
10 minutes

### 7. Cultural Change

- a. One way some people believe the Academy can improve unwanted sexual contact prevention and response is to change the culture and attitudes toward this issue. Do you agree? Please provide some examples of areas where change is needed.

- b. How can such a cultural change be made at this Academy? What elements need to be addressed?
- c. How does the Academy secure buy-in for change from the students? From leadership, faculty, and staff?
- d. Who should lead a cultural change? How would they do so?
- e. Do you think students treat each other with dignity and respect? What does it take to reach students about the importance of civility and proper behavior toward each other? Are these potential areas for cultural or attitudinal change?
- f. Are students prepared to lead other students with regard to preventing and responding to unwanted behaviors? Do they take that responsibility seriously?
- g. Do you believe it would be productive to have a Cadet "Dignity and Respect Code" much like the Honor Code, in order to instill these values in the cadet system?
- h. As preparation for future leadership positions, should issues such as proper behavior, unwanted sexual contact/harassment prevention, and response to unwanted sexual contact/harassment be made into graded coursework to ensure students take it seriously? Would that enhance accountability?
- i. Does the highly competitive nature of the Academy affect how students treat each other with respect to unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment? How does the competitive nature affect reporting of inappropriate behaviors?

Now I want to ask you a couple of quick questions about recent changes here at the Academy.

**Time for Question 8:  
5 minutes**

## **8. Recent Changes**

- a. Are you aware of any changes the Academy has implemented recently to address unwanted sexual contact or sexual harassment [such as tighter dormitory patrols]? Please describe.
- b. Are these changes effective? Did they go far enough? What else could be done?
- c. Is there a point where such actions become counter-productive [unintended consequences]?
- d. Have you seen changes in students over the years in terms of behaviors, attitudes, moral standards, and competitiveness? How do such changes relate to unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment behaviors?

I would like to wrap up our session today with a couple of final questions.

Time for Question 9:  
5 minutes

**9. Additional recommendations for addressing unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment**

- a. Do you think the Academy should do more to make counseling or Sexual Assault Prevention and Response resources available to students who experienced trauma prior to entering the military?
- b. What else can you tell us about unwanted sexual contact and sexual harassment at the Academy? What did we not ask that we should have?

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group. As I mentioned at the beginning, we will treat all of your comments anonymously. There is no attribution to any of you for the specific comments you made today. Please also respect that non-attribution when you leave here today. Our goal is to provide the best data possible and you have helped us greatly today with your comments and insights.

One last comment – on the last page of the handout you will see a list of resources available to you if you would like to follow up with us or have any questions. It also lists Academy resources if you know of a student who would like to talk to someone about any experiences they might have had with unwanted gender-related behaviors.

Thank you again for your participation.

**Appendix P.**  
**USCGA Faculty, Athletic Staff, and Military**  
**Cadre Handout**



**2013 Service Academy  
Gender Relations Focus  
Group  
U.S. Coast Guard Academy**

**Handout for Faculty, Athletic  
Staff, Military Cadre  
Participants**

## **Purpose**

We have asked you to be here with us to help us investigate issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention and response. You might recall that last year students at your Academy were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey on these topics. This year, as was done two years ago, a series of focus groups are being conducted to provide information to DoD and Academy leadership. This year is the first year we have invited members of the faculty, athletic and activity staffs, and military cadre to participate. Similar focus groups are being conducted at all three Service Academies and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

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- Any questions?

### ***Discussion Resources***

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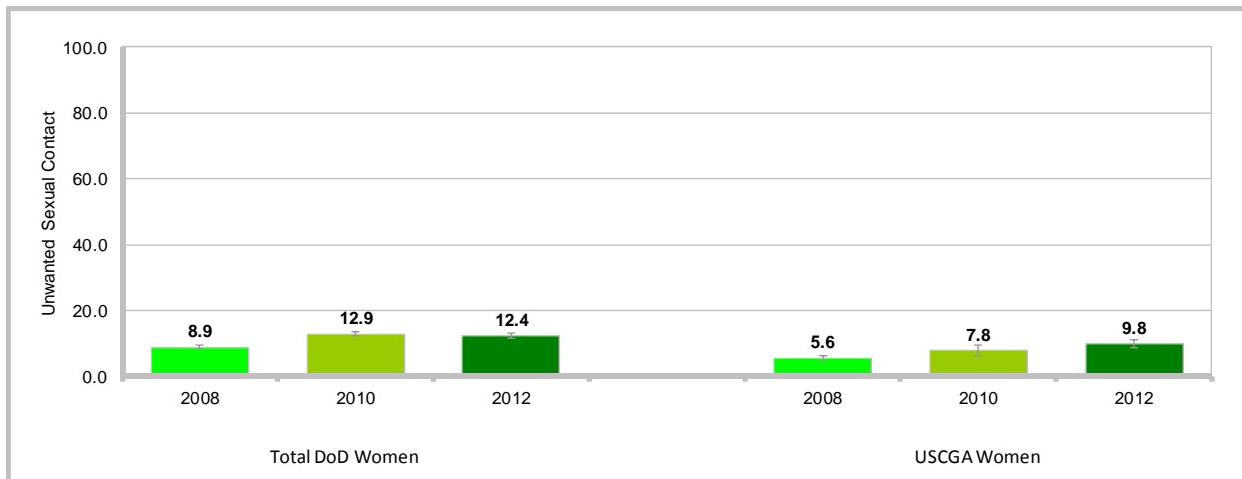
To assure statistically reliability of the survey results, we surveyed all of the cadets here at the Coast Guard Academy. The full report is available on the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPRO) Web site at: [http://www.sapr.mil/media/pdf/reports/FINAL\\_APY\\_11-12\\_MSA\\_Report.pdf](http://www.sapr.mil/media/pdf/reports/FINAL_APY_11-12_MSA_Report.pdf)



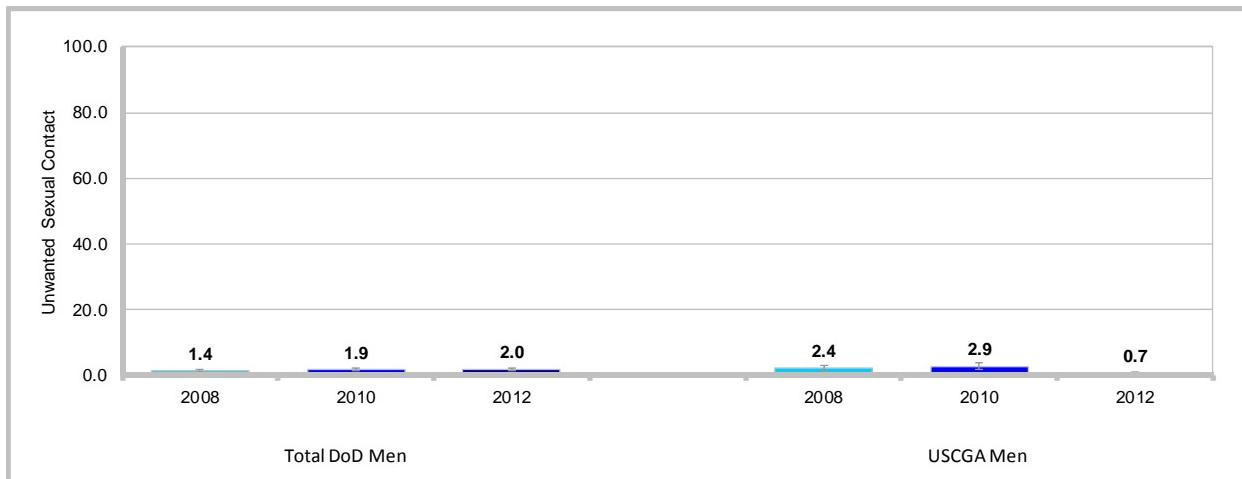
## Unwanted Sexual Contact

Unwanted sexual contact consists of a range of unwanted behaviors including unwanted sexual touching, attempted sex, and completed sex.

### 1. Unwanted Sexual Contact Rates for Women



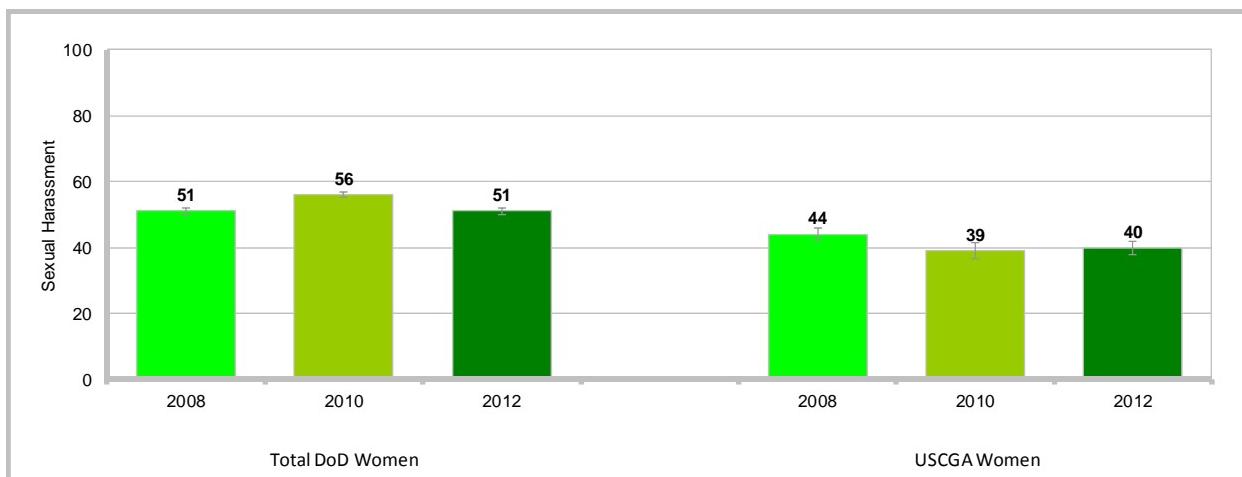
### 2. Unwanted Sexual Contact Rates for Men



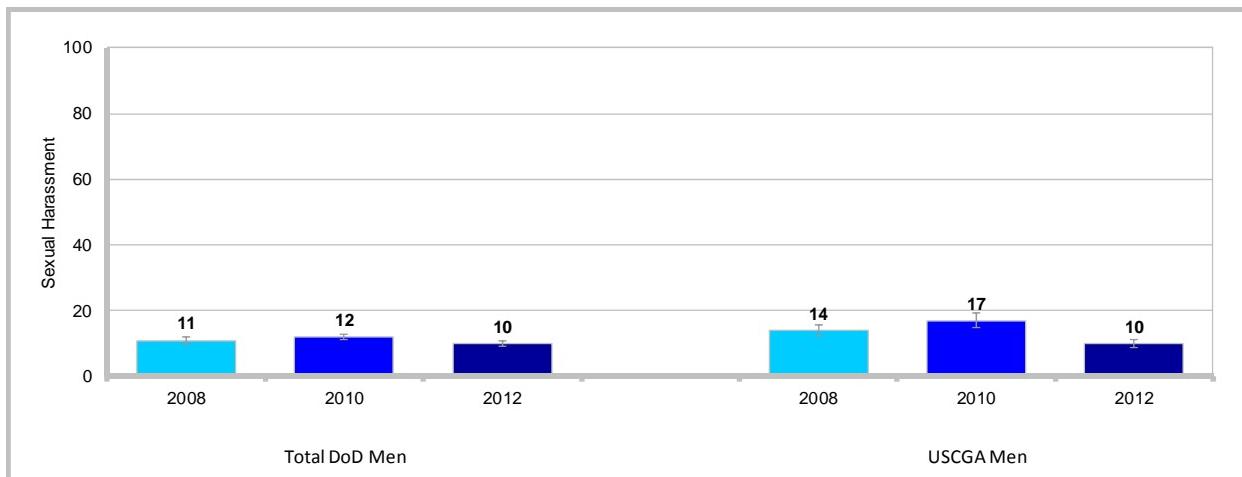
## Sexual Harassment and Sexist Behavior

- **Sexual harassment**
  - Crude/Offensive Behavior – verbal/nonverbal behaviors of a sexual nature that were offensive or embarrassing
  - Unwanted Sexual Attention – unwanted attempts to establish a sexual relationship
  - Sexual Coercion – classic *quid pro quo* instances of special treatment or favoritism conditioned on sexual cooperation
  - One “labeling” item that asks if the student considers any of the selected behaviors to be sexual harassment
- **Sexist behavior**
  - Verbal/nonverbal behaviors that convey insulting, offensive, and/or condescending attitudes based on one’s gender

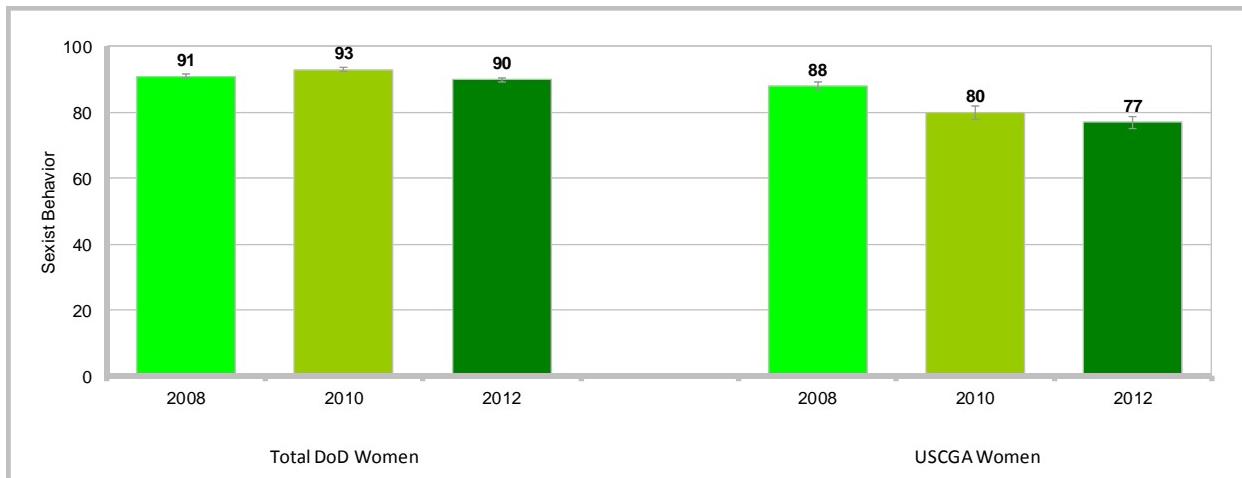
### 3. Sexual Harassment Rates for Women



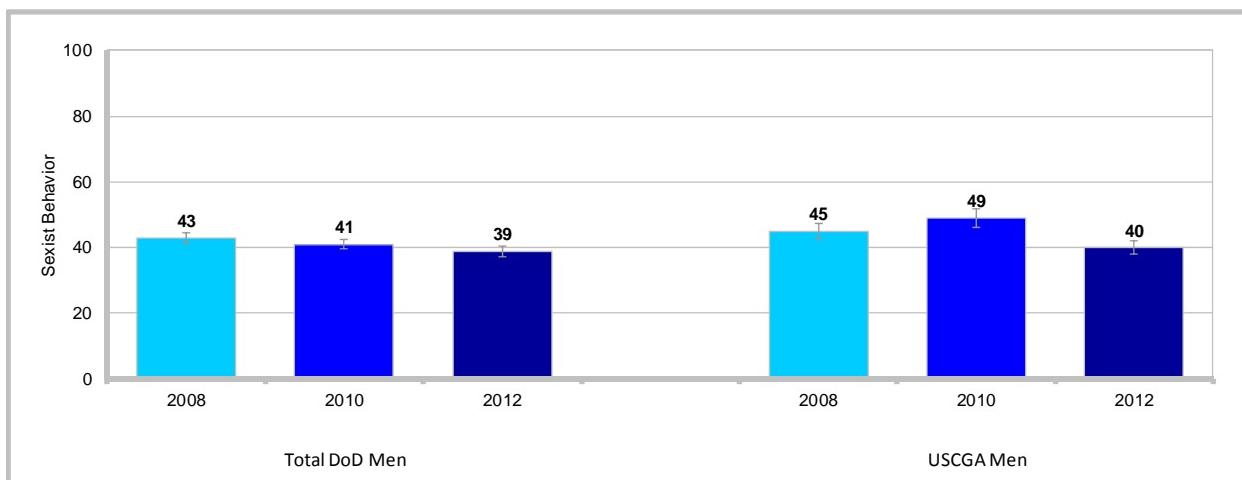
### 4. Sexual Harassment Rates for Men



## 5. Sexist Behavior Rates for Women



## 6. Sexist Behavior Rates for Men



## 7. Number of incidents reported in the past year

Type of Report	Number of Reports
Sexual Assault – Unrestricted	7



We appreciate your participation in this focus group. In the event you would like to discuss issues related to the focus group with someone from DMDC during (or after) our visit to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, please contact Ms. Kristin Williams at 571-372-1033 or DSN 372-1033.

If you wish to provide feedback regarding the focus group process or the focus group content, please send us an e-mail at: SA-Survey@mail.mil. If you know of others who might like to contact a member of the DMDC team, please share this information with them. You may also use the Department of Defense SAFE Hotline at 877-995-5247 to report abuse of authority, mismanagement, fraud, and waste.

If you feel uncomfortable or uneasy after participating in the focus group, and/or if you are a survivor of sexual assault, or have experienced sexual harassment or stalking, we strongly encourage you to contact the following resources that are available to you:

**Center for Counseling and Development:** (860) 444-8520 (0800-1630, M-F)

Website:

<http://eduportal1/Divisions/Superintendent/Center%20for%20Counseling%20%20Develop/Pages/default.aspx>  
**SARC:** Shannon Norenberg (860) 625-1002 (24 hours)

**CASA Peer Advocacy Helpline:** (860) 625-0088 (24 hours)

CASA Website: <http://eduportal1/sites/CASA/default.aspx>

Victims Advocacy Website: <http://eduportal1/sites/CASA/Lists/Victim%20Advocates/AllItems.aspx>

Sexual Assault Crisis Center of Eastern Connecticut: (888) 999-5545 (24 hours)

Website: <http://saccec.org/>

**Cadet Chaplain's Office:** (860) 444-8480

## REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED (From - To)		
30-11-2013	Final Report	March 2013-December 2013		
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE		5a. CONTRACT NUMBER		
2013 Service Academy Gender Relations Focus Groups		5b. GRANT NUMBER		
		5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER		
6. AUTHOR(S)		5d. PROJECT NUMBER		
Paul J. Cook, SRA International, Inc.		5e. TASK NUMBER		
Elizabeth P. Van Winkle, Defense Manpower Data Center		5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER		
Defense Manpower Data Center 4800 Mark Center Drive, Suite 04E25 Alexandria, VA 22350		2013-045		
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)		
		11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)		
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT				
Approved for Public Release; distribution unlimited				
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES				
14. ABSTRACT				
The report provides the results for the 2013 Service Academy Gender Relations Focus Groups that the Defense Manpower Data Center conducted in response to U.S. Code 10, as amended by Section 532 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007. This study is part of an annual assessment cycle at the Service Academies that consists of alternating surveys and focus groups to assess the incidence of unwanted sexual contact and harassment and related issues at the Academies.				
15. SUBJECT TERMS				
Demographics, gender-related experiences, gender relations, personnel policies, sexual harassment, sexual assault, unwanted sexual contact, stalking, training, values, Service Academies				
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:		17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE	UU	Kristin H. Williams
U	U	U	488	19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include area code) 571-372-1033

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- 14. ABSTRACT.** A brief (approximately 200 words) factual summary of the most significant information.
- 15. SUBJECT TERMS.** Key words or phrases identifying major concepts in the report.
- 16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION.** Enter security classification in accordance with security classification regulations, e.g. U, C, S, etc. If this form contains classified information, stamp classification level on the top and bottom of this page.
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